This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Jane Bowdler

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
GENERAL LIBRARY

GALEN C. HARTMAN
LIBRARY FUND

B. Benke

POEMS

AND

ESSAYS,

BY THE LATE

MISS BOWDLER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

POEMS

AND

ESSAYS,

BY THE LATE

MISS BOWDLER, Jane.

VOL. I.

THE THIRD EDITION.

PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE GENERAL HOSPITAL AT BATH.

Vattene in pace alma beata & bella!
Vattene in pace a la ſuperna ſede,
E laſcia al mondo eſempio di tua fede!

ARIOSTO.

B A T H:

PRINTED BY R. CRUTTWELL;

AND SOLD BY

C. DILLY, POULTRY, J. ROBSON AND T. HOOKHAM, NEW-BOND-STREET, LONDON; AND N. R. CHEYNE, NEW EDINBURGH.

M DCC LXXXVII.

828
B779
1787
v.1

T42-190282
2v.

PREFACE.

THE following Poems and Eſſays were written to relieve the tedious hours of pain and ſickneſs. The Reader who ſeeks for amuſement only, may poſſibly receive no gratification from the peruſal of them; but for ſuch readers they are not intended.

To the humble and pious Chriſtian, who feels the preſſure of diſtreſs, and ſeeks in Religion for that ſupport and conſolation which nothing elſe can beſtow;

ſtow; to him is preſented an example of patience and reſignation which no ſufferings could conquer.

He will not find in the following pages the pride of Stoiciſm, or the cold precepts of unfeeling proſperity. The Author of theſe Eſſays felt, with the keeneſt ſenſibility, the uncommon misfortune which condemned her for ten years, in the prime of life, to conſtantly increaſing ſufferings; but ſhe found, in the principles which are here laid down, ſuch motives of conſolation as rendered her ſuperior to all the ſorrows of life, and to the lingering tortures of a moſt painful death.

They

They who were preſent at that awful ſcene, can need no other evidence in ſupport of a truth which the reader will find often repeated in theſe Eſſays, viz. that "though Religion cannot prevent "loſſes and diſappointments, pains and "ſorrows; yet in the midſt of them all, "and when every earthly pleaſure fails, "it commands, it inſtructs, it enables "us to be happy.

CONTENTS.

CONTENTS.

POEMS.

	Page
Ode to Hope - - -	1
Elegy on the Death of Mr. Garrick -	9
A Ballad - - - -	15
Subject *Love*, for the Vaſe at Batheaſton Villa	23
To Miſs ——, then two Years old -	27
Louiſa; a Tale - - -	33
Envy; a Fragment - -	51
On the New Year - -	59

ESSAYS.

On Senſibility - - -	75
On the Character of Lætitia -	121
On Politeneſs - - -	153
On the Character of Curio -	199
On Fortitude - - -	209

POEMS.

ODE TO HOPE.

FRIEND to the wretch whoſe boſom knows no joy!
Parent of bliſs beyond the reach of fate!
Celeſtial HOPE! thou gift divine,
Sweet balm of grief! O ſtill be mine.
When pains torment, and cares annoy,
Thou only canſt their force abate,
And gild the gloom which ſhades this mortal ſtate.
Though oft thy joys are falſe and vain,
Though anxious doubts attend thy train,

Though diſappointment mock thy care,
And point the way to fell deſpair,
Yet ſtill my ſecret ſoul ſhall own thy pow'r
In ſorrow's bittereſt pang, in pleaſure's gayeſt hour.
For from the date of Reaſon's birth
That wond'rous pow'r was given,
To ſoften every grief on earth,
To raiſe the ſoul from thoughtleſs mirth,
And wing its flight to heaven.
Nor pain nor pleaſure can its force deſtroy,
In every varied ſcene it points to future joy.

II.

Fancy, wave thy airy pinions,
Bid the ſoft ideas riſe,
Spread o'er all thy wide dominions
Vernal ſweets and cloudleſs ſkies.
And lo! on yonder verdant plain,
A lovely Youthful Train appear,
Their gentle hearts have felt no pain,
Their guiltleſs boſoms know no fear:

In each gay ſcene ſome new delight they find,
Yet fancy gayer proſpects ſtill behind.
Where are the ſoft deluſions fled?
Muſt wiſdom teach the ſoul to mourn?
Return, ye days of ignorance, return:
Before my eyes your fairy viſions ſpread!
Alas! thoſe viſions charm no more,
The pleaſing dream of youth is o'er;
Far other thoughts muſt now the ſoul employ,
It glows with other hopes, it pants for other joy.

III.

The trumpet ſounds to War:
Loud ſhouts re-echo from the mountain's ſide,
The din of battle thunders from afar,
The foaming torrent rolls a crimſon tide;
The Youthful Warrior's breaſt with ardour glows,
In thought he triumphs o'er ten thouſand foes:
Elate with hope he ruſhes on,
The battle ſeems already won,

The vanquiſh'd hoſts before him fly,
His heart exults in fancied victory,
Nor heeds the flying ſhaft, nor thinks of danger nigh.
Methinks I ſee him now—
Fall'n his creſt—his glory gone—
The opening laurel faded on his brow—
Silent the trump of his aſpiring fame!
No future age ſhall hear his name,
But darkneſs ſpread around her ſable gloom,
And deep oblivion reſt upon his tomb.

IV.

Through ſeas unknown, to diſtant lands,
In queſt of gain the bold Advent'rer goes,
Fearleſs roves o'er Afric's ſands,
India's heats, or Zembla's ſnows:
Each riſing day his dang'rous toil renews;
But toils and dangers check his courſe in vain:
Cheer'd by HOPE, he ſtill purſues
Fancy'd good through real pain,
Still in thought enjoys the prize,

And future happy days in long ſucceſſion riſe:
Yet all his bliſs a moment may deſtroy,
Frail are his brighteſt hopes, uncertain all his joy.

V.

Hark! the ſprightly voice of Pleaſure
Calls to yonder roſy bow'r,
There ſhe ſcatters all her treaſure,
There exerts her magic power.
Liſten to the pleaſing call,
Follow, Mortals, follow all;
Lead the dance, and ſpread the feaſt,
Crown with roſes every gueſt:
Now the ſprightly minſtrels ſound,
Pleaſure's voice is heard around,
And Pleaſure's ſprightly voice the hills and dales reſound.
Whence roſe that ſecret ſigh?—
What ſudden gloom o'erclouds thy cheerful brow?
Say, does not every pleaſure wait thee now,
That e'er could charm the ear, or court the eye?—
In vain does Nature laviſh all her ſtore;

Pains torment, or cares annoy:
Then ſhall ev'ry guiltleſs pleaſure
Smile with charms unknown before,
HOPE, ſecure in real treaſure,
Mourn her blaſted joys no more:
Then through each revolving year—
Though earthly glories fade away,
Though youth, and ſtrength, and life itſelf, decay—
Yet ſtill more bright the proſpect ſhall appear;
Happier ſtill the lateſt day,
Brighteſt far the parting ray.
O'er life's laſt ſcene celeſtial beams ſhall ſhine,
'Till death at length ſhall burſt the chain,
While ſongs of triumph ſound on high;
Then ſhall HOPE her power reſign,
Loſt in endleſs extacy,
And never-fading joy in Heaven's full glories reign.

ON THE

DEATH

OF

MR. GARRICK.

THE laſt ſad rites were done—the ſacred ground
Was clos'd—and *Garrick*'s duſt to duſt return'd;
In life, in death, with general honours crown'd,
A nation own'd his worth—applauded—mourn'd.

For who, like him, could every ſenſe controul,
To *Shakeſpeare*'s ſelf new charms, new force, impart;
Bid unknown horrors ſhake the firmeſt ſoul,
And unknown feelings melt the hardeſt heart?

Oft when his eye, with more than magic pow'r,
Gave life to thoughts which words could ne'er reveal,
The voice of praiſe awhile was heard no more,
All gaz'd in ſilence, and could only feel.

Each thought ſuſpended in a general pauſe,
All ſhar'd his paſſions, and forgot their own—
'Till rous'd at length, in thunders of applauſe,
Th' accordant dictates of each heart were known.

O loſt for ever to our wond'ring view!—
Yet faithful memory ſhall preſerve thy name;
E'en diſtant times thy honours ſhall renew,
And *Garrick* ſtill ſhall ſhare his *Shakeſpeare*'s fame.

Thus muſing, through the lonely aile I ſtray'd,
Recall'd the wonders of his matchleſs pow'rs,
And many a former ſcene in thought ſurvey'd,
While all unheeded paſs'd the ſilent hours.

With mournful awe I trod the facred ſtones,
Where kings and heroes ſleep in long repoſe,
And trophies, mould'ring o'er the warrior's bones,
Proclaim how frail the life which fame beſtows.

Now ſunk the laſt faint beam of cloſing day,
Each form was loſt, and hufh'd was ev'ry ſound;
All, all was ſilent as the ſleeping clay,
And darkneſs ſpread her ſable veil around.

At once, methought, a more than midnight gloom
With deathlike horror chill'd my throbbing breaſt,
When lo! a voice, deep murmuring from the tomb,
Theſe awful accents on my ſoul impreſt:—

"Vain are the glories of a nation's praiſe;
"The boaſt of wit, the pride of genius, vain:
"A long, long night ſucceeds the tranſient blaze,
"Where darkneſs, ſolitude, and ſilence, reign.

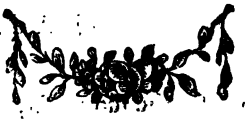
" The ſhouts of loud applauſe which thouſands gave,
" On me nor pride, nor pleaſure, now beſtow;
" Like the chill blaſt that murmurs o'er my grave,
" They paſs away—nor reach the duſt below.

" One virtuous deed, to all the world unknown,
" Outweighs the higheſt bliſs which theſe can give,
" Can cheer the ſoul when youth and ſtrength are flown,
" In ſickneſs triumph, and in death ſurvive.

" What though to thee, in life's remoteſt ſphere,
" Nor nature's gifts, nor fortune's, are conſign'd,
" Let brighteſt proſpects to thy ſoul appear,
" And hopes immortal elevate thy mind.

" The ſculptur'd marble ſhall diſſolve in duſt,
" And fame, and wealth, and honours, paſs away:
" Not ſuch the triumphs of the good and juſt,
" Not ſuch the glories of eternal day.

" Theſe, theſe ſhall live, when ages are no more,
" With never-fading luſtre ſtill ſhall ſhine:——
" Go then, to Heaven devote thy utmoſt pow'r,
" And know—whoe'er thou art—the prize is thine."



A

BALLAD.

[This little Poem was occaſioned by the following fact:——A poſt-boy was apprehended on ſuſpicion of ſtealing a bank-note from a letter, which the author, at the requeſt of a friend, had conveyed to the poſt-office. This circumſtance obliged her to appear as an evidence againſt the unfortunate young man, where ſhe was witneſs to the diſtreſs of his aged parents, who were waiting at the door of the Hall, to learn the event of a trial which was to decide on the life of an only ſon. The innocence of his intentions appearing very evident, the youth was acquitted.]

"RETURN, return, my hapleſs ſpouſe,
"Nor ſeek the fatal place,
"Where thoughtleſs crouds expecting, ſtand
"To ſee thy child's diſgrace.

"Methinks I ſee the judges ſet,
"The council all attend,
"And JEMMY trembling at the bar,
"Bereft of every friend.

"How ſhall a mother's eye ſuſtain
"The dreadful ſight to ſee!——
"Return, return, my hapleſs ſpouſe,
"And leave the taſk to me."

'Perſuade me not, my faithful love,
'Perſuade me not to go,
'But let me ſee my JEMMY's face,
'And ſhare in all his woe.

'I'll kneel before his judge's feet,
'And prayers and tears employ—
'For pity take my wretched life,
'But ſpare my darling boy.

'When trembling prostrate in the dust,
'My heartfelt sorrows flow,
'Sure, sure the hardest heart will melt
'To see a mother's woe.

'How did I watch his infant years,
'Through fond affection blind,
'And hop'd the comfort of my age
'In JEMMY's love to find!

'Oft when he join'd the youthful train,
'And rov'd the woods among,
'Full many a wishful look I sent,
'And thought he staid too long.

'And when at length I saw my boy
'Come bounding o'er the plain,
'(The brightest of the sprightly throng,
'The foremost of the train)

'How have I gaz'd with fond delight,
'His harmleſs joy to ſee,
'As home he brought a load of flow'rs,
'And choſe the beſt for me.

'Why would'ſt thou ſeek the noiſy town,
'Where fraud and cunning dwell?—
'Alas! the heart that knows no guile
'Should chooſe the humble cell.

'So might I ſtill with eager joy
'Expect my child's return;
'And not, as now, his hapleſs fate
'In bitter ſorrow mourn.

'Laſt night when all was dark and ſtill,
('O wond'rous tale to tell!)
'I heard a mournful ſolemn ſound—
'Methought 'twas JEMMY'S knell.

'And oft amidſt the dreary gloom
'I heard a diſmal groan—
'And oft I felt a clay-cold hand,
'Which fondly preſs'd my own.

'Anon I heard the ſound confus'd
'Of all the ruſtic train,
'And JEMMY's fainting, trembling voice
'For pity begg'd in vain.

'Methought I ſaw the fatal cord,
'I ſaw him dragg'd along—
'I ſaw him ſeiz'd'——She could no more,
For anguiſh ſtopp'd her tongue.

Her faithful partner gently ſtrove
Her ſinking heart to cheer,
Yet while his lips of comfort ſpoke,
He could not hide a tear.

But now the voice of joy or woe
To her alike was vain;
Her thought ſtill dwelt on JEMMY's fate,
Her lips on JEMMY's name.

Thus on the mournful pair advanc'd,
And reach'd the fatal place,
Where thoughtleſs crouds were gather'd round
To ſee their child's diſgrace:——

Such crouds as run with idle gaze
Alike to every ſhew,
Nor heed a wretched father's tears,
Nor feel a mother's woe.

Sudden ſhe ſtopp'd—for now in view
The crouded hall appear'd—
Chill horror ſeiz'd her ſtiffen'd frame,
Her voice no more was heard.

She could not move, ſhe could not weep,
Her hands were claſp'd on high;
And all her ſoul in eager gaze
Seem'd ſtarting from her eye.

For her the huſband trembled now
With tender anxious fear;
"O LUCY! turn and ſpeak to me:"
But LUCY could not hear.

Still fix'd, ſhe ſtood in ſilent woe,
Still gazing on the door;
When lo! a murmur through the croud
Proclaim'd the trial o'er.

At once the blood forſook her cheek,
Her feeble ſpirits fled;
When JEMMY flew into her arms,
And rais'd her drooping head.

The well-known voice recall'd her ſoul,
She claſp'd him to her breaſt:——
O joy too vaſt for words to tell!
Let Fancy paint the reſt.

SUBJECT

LOVE.

For the VASE at BATH-EASTON VILLA.

WITH bow unſtrung, and arrows broke,
Young CUPID to his mother ran,
And tears faſt flowing as he ſpoke,
He thus his ſad complaint began:——

"Ah! where is now that boaſted pow'r
"Which kings and heroes once confeſs'd?
"I try my arrows o'er and o'er,
"But find they cannot reach the breaſt.

" I ſeek the rooms, the play, the ball,
" Where Beauty ſpreads her brighteſt charms;
" But loſt in crowds my arrows fall,
" And Pleaſure ſlights my feeble arms.

" Yet real pleaſure is not there,
" A phantom ſtill deludes their aim;
" In Diſſipation's careleſs air
" They ſeek her charms, but ſeek in vain.

" Here Pride eſſays my darts to throw,
" But from her hand they ne'er can harm;
" For ſtill ſhe turns aſide the blow;
" Not Beauty's ſelf with Pride can charm.

" Coquetry here with roving eyes
" Quick darts a thouſand arrows round;
" She thinks to conquer by ſurprize—
" But ah! thoſe arrows never wound.

"Here Cunning boasts to guide their course.
"With cautious aim and sly design;
"But still she checks their native force—
"Touch'd by her hand, they drop from mine.

"Here Affectation taints the smile,
"Which else had darted Love around:
"The charms of Art can ne'er beguile:
"But where shall Nature's charms be found?

"While these their various arts essay,
"And vainly strive to gain the heart,
"Good-Sense disdainful turns away,
"And Reason scorns my pointless dart.

"Yet they to Love were once ally'd,
"For Love could ev'ry joy dispense;
"Sweet Pleasure smil'd by Virtue's side,
"And Love was pair'd with Innocence."

Fair VENUS claſp'd her darling child,
And gently ſooth'd his anxious breaſt:
'Reſume thy darts,' ſhe ſaid, and ſmil'd,
'Thy wrongs ſhall quickly be redreſs'd.

'With artleſs bluſh and gentle mien,
'With charms unknowing pride or care,
'With all the graces in her train,
'My lovely *ANNA ſhall appear.

'Go then, my boy, to earth again,
'Once more aſſume deſpotic pow'r;
'For Modeſty with her ſhall reign,
'And Senſe and Reaſon ſhall adore.

* Miſs Anne M——LL, now Mrs. D——N.

To MISS ——,

THEN TWO YEARS OLD.

SWEET bloſſom, opening to the beams of day!
Dear object of affection's tender care!
For whom ſhe gently ſmooths the painful way,
Inſpires the anxious wiſh, the ardent pray'r!

How pleaſing in thy infant mind to trace
The dawn of reaſon's force, of fancy's fire,
The ſoft impreſſion of each future grace,
And all a parent's warmeſt hopes deſire.

How ſweet that ſmile, unknown to ev'ry art,
Inſpir'd by innocence, and peace, and joy!
How pure the tranſports of thy guiltleſs heart,
Which yet no fears alarm, no cares annoy!

No airy phantoms of uncertain woe,
The bleſſings of the preſent hour allay;
No empty hopes a fancied good beſtow,
Then leave the ſoul to real grief a prey.

Gay pleaſure ſparkles in thy gentle eye,
Some new delight in every ſcene appears;
Yet ſoft affection heaves a ſecret ſigh,
And ſends an anxious look to diſtant years.

While thoſe dear ſmiles with tender love I view,
And o'er thy infant charms enraptur'd bend,
Does my fond hope a real good purſue?
And do theſe arms embrace a future friend?

Should heaven to me a lengthen'd date aſſign,
Will e'er that love thy gentle heart engage
With friendſhip's pureſt flame to anſwer mine,
And charm the languor of declining age?

Yet not for me theſe ardent wiſhes riſe;
Beyond the limits of my fleeting years,
For thee, dear babe, my prayers aſcend the ſkies,
And pleaſing hope my anxious boſom cheers.

May innocence ſtill guard thy artleſs youth,
Ere vice and folly's ſnares thy breaſt alarm,
While ſweetneſs, modeſty, and ſpotleſs truth,
Beam from thy ſoul, and brighten ev'ry charm!

May Heaven to thee its choiceſt gifts impart,
Beyond what wealth beſtows, or pride purſues;
With ev'ry virtue animate thy heart,
And raiſe thy efforts to the nobleſt views.

In tranſport wrapt may each fond parent ſee
Thro' riſing years thoſe virtues ſtill improve,
While every tender care now felt for thee,
Thy heart repays with never-ceaſing love.

When pleaſure ſmiles, and ſtrews thy path with flow'rs,
And youthful fancy doubles every joy,
May brighter hopes attend thy gayeſt hours,
And point to bliſs which time can ne'er deſtroy!

And when the pangs of woe thy breaſt muſt tear,
When pleaſure fades, and fancy charms no more,
Still may thoſe hopes the gloomy proſpect cheer,
Unmov'd by grief, unchang'd by fortune's pow'r.

May love, eſteem, and friendſhip, crown thy days,
With joys to guilt unknown, from doubt ſecure,
While heavenly truth inſpires the voice of praiſe,
And bids that praiſe beyond the world endure!

Through life to virtue's ſacred dictates true,
Be ſuch thy joys as angels muſt approve,
Such as may lead to raptures ever new,
To endleſs peace, and pureſt bliſs above.

LOUISA.

A TALE.

"O LEND your wings, ye fav'ring gales,
"And gently wave the ſea,
"And ſwell my huſband's ſpreading ſails,
"And waft him home to me!

"His toils and dangers all are paſt,
"And, bleſt with fortune's ſtore,
"From diſtant climes he comes at laſt
"To view his native ſhore.

"And with him comes the faithful youth,
"Who gain'd my daughter's love;
"Whoſe virtue, conſtancy, and truth,
"The coldeſt heart might move.

"May all the graces wait around,
"And heighten all her charms!——
"He comes, with wealth and glory crown'd,
"To my LOUISA's arms.

"Now Fancy flies to diſtant days,
"And views the lovely pair,
"And hears the voice of general praiſe
"Their matchleſs worth declare.

"How ſhall thy mother's heart expand
"With joys unknown before,
"When thouſands bleſs the bounteous hand
"That gave thee wealth and pow'r!

"Do I not ſee a diſtant hill
"O'er yonder waves appear!—
"Our ardent vows at length prevail,
"My heart proclaims them near.

"With us in every joy to ſhare,
"Our much-lov'd heroes come—
"Propitious Heav'n! O hear our pray'r,
"And guide them ſafely home!"

'Propitious Heaven, O hear our pray'r!'
LOUISA trembling cry'd,
For ah! the chill blaſt wav'd her hair,
The riſing cloud ſhe ſpy'd.

Near and more near the tempeſt drew,
The clouds obſcur'd the ſky,
The winds in hoarſer murmurs blew,
The waves were toſs'd on high:

And now they daſh againſt the ſhore,
And ſhake the ſolid ground;
The thunder rolls, the torrents roar,
The lightnings flaſh around.——

Ah! who can paint LOUISA's fear,
Her agonies impart?——
The ſhrieks of death aſſail her ear,
And horror chills her heart.

At length, the raging tempeſt o'er,
She view'd the fatal coaſt;
A wreck appear'd upon the ſhore—
She ſunk—in terror loſt.

"My life! my joy! my only love!"
A voice at diſtance cries:—
That voice her inmoſt ſoul could move,
She ſtarts with wild ſurpriſe.

Now o'er the beach with eager haſte
She ſees her HENRY fly:
No more ſhe feels her terrors paſt:
'Twas bliſs—'twas extacy.

Her aged father too appears,
He preſs'd her to his heart;
But, as he preſs'd, his ſtreaming tears
Some ſecret grief impart.

His much-lov'd wife in tranſport flies,
In all their joy to ſhare;
Yet views her lord with anxious eyes,
And feels a tender fear.

The fond embrace he oft renews,
And oft, with grief oppreſs'd,
The fatal wreck again he views,
And ſmites his trembling breaſt.

"Lo! there," he cry'd, "the ſad remains
"Of my once boaſted ſtore,
"For all the fruit of all our pains
"Is ſunk—to riſe no more.

"Yet ſhould this breaſt ne'er heave a groan
"For all my fruitleſs care:
"Did ſorrow ſeize on me alone,
"My woes I well could bear:

"But ah! for thee my heart muſt grieve,
"For thee I priz'd my gain:—
"And did I then my child deceive
"With hopes believ'd in vain?

"Still to our humble home confin'd,
"Muſt rural taſks employ
"A nymph to ſhine in courts deſign'd,
"And brighten ev'ry joy.

"In thought, by pleaſing hope inſpir'd,
"I ſaw my child appear,
"By all belov'd, by all admir'd,
"The faireſt of the fair.

"I ſaw her rais'd to pomp and ſtate,
"And, rich in fortune's ſtore,
"I heard the praiſes of the great,
"The bleſſings of the poor.

"With fond delight my boſom glow'd,
"By ſoothing fancy led,
"And Heaven the wiſh'd ſucceſs beſtow'd:—
"But ah! the dream is fled.

"And thou, dear partner of each care,
"This anxious heart has known;
"Thou too, with me, haſt felt thy ſhare
"Of hopes—for ever gone.

"Thy thoughts, like mine, in time to come,
"A ſcene of bliſs enjoy'd,
"Till one ſad moment's fatal doom
"The airy good deſtroy'd.

"And thou with me our loſs muſt mourn,
"Thy tears with mine deſcend;
"And thus, alaſs! my wiſh'd return
"Our tranſient joy muſt end."

While thus with agonizing ſighs
They view'd the fatal place,
LOUISA's mild, yet ſtedfaſt eyes
Were fix'd on HENRY's face.

By her own heart, his heart ſhe knew,
She read his virtues there:
Ah! bleſt indeed the choſen few
Who thus each thought can ſhare!

Serene and firm their joys ſhall prove,
And every change endure,
No mean ſuſpicion taint their love,
In juſt eſteem ſecure.

And now her ſoul with tranſport glows,
And animates each grace,
A ſmile, beyond what pleaſure knows,
Adorns her lovely face.

'And is it thus, my friends,' ſhe cry'd,
'When every ſtorm is paſt,
'When all our fears at once ſubſide,
'Thus do we meet at laſt?

'O lift with me your hearts to Heaven
'In ſtrains of ardent praiſe,
'With tranſport own the bleſſings giv'n,
'To crown our future days.

'How oft my fervent pray'rs arose,
'While terrors shook my soul,
'To HIM who could the storm compose,
'And winds and waves controul!

'My prayers are heard—my fears are gone,
'My much-lov'd friends I see,
'I feel a joy till now unknown,—
'And can ye grieve for me?

'Content I shar'd an humble fate,
'Nor wish'd in courts to shine;—
'The airy dream which pleas'd of late
'With joy I now resign.

'What though no scenes of gay delight
'Amuse each idle guest,
'Nor costly luxuries invite
'To share the splendid feast!

'Yet Peace and Innocence ſhall ſmile,
'And purer joys afford,
'And Love, ſecure from doubt or guile,
'Shall bleſs our humble board.

'What though we boaſt nor wealth, nor pow'r,
'Each ſorrow to relieve,
'A little, from our little ſtore,
'The poor ſhall yet receive;

'And words of peace ſhall ſoothe the woe
'Which riches could not heal,
'And ſweet Benevolence beſtow
'An aid which all muſt feel.

'Beyond the reach of fortune's pow'r,
'Her gentle force extends,
'She cheers affliction's darkeſt hour,
'And joy her ſteps attends.

'Though here to narrow bounds confin'd,
'Ordain'd to lowly views,
'For ever free, the virtuous mind
'Her glorious path purſues;

'In proſp'rous ſtate, o'er all ſhe ſhow'rs
'The various bleſſings given;
'In humble life, exerts her pow'rs,
'And truſts the reſt to Heav'n.

'The lofty dwellings of the great
'Full many a wretch contain,
'Who feels the cares of pomp and ſtate,
'But ſeeks their joys in vain:

'Yet ſtarting from his ſhort repoſe,
'Alarm'd at ev'ry blaſt,
'With anxious fear he dreads to loſe
'That good he ne'er could taſte.

'And oft beneath the ſilent ſhade
'A noble heart remains,
'Where Heaven's bright image is diſplay'd,
'And ev'ry virtue reigns.

'Sweet peace and joy that heart ſhall find,
'Unmov'd by grief or pain:
'Be ſuch the lot to us aſſign'd,
'And fortune's frowns are vain.——

'O ye, who taught me firſt to know
'Bright Virtue's ſacred flame,
'To whom far more than life I owe,
'Who more than duty claim;

'Ah! let me dry each tender tear,
'And ev'ry doubt deſtroy,
'Diſpel at once each anxious fear,
'And call you back to joy.

'And thou, my HENRY! dearer far
'Than fortune's richeſt prize,
'I know thy heart——and thou canſt dare
'Her treaſures to deſpiſe:

'A purer bliſs that heart ſhall prove,
'From care and ſorrow free,
'Content with innocence and love,
'With poverty and me.'——

In tranſport loſt, and freed from fears,
The happy parents ſmil'd;
And bluſhing dry'd the falling tears
And claſp'd their matchleſs child.

Her HENRY, fix'd in ſilent gaze,
Beheld his lovely bride:
"O Heav'n! accept my humble praiſe,"
At length entranc'd he cry'd.

" To all my ſtorms and dangers paſt,
" If joys like theſe ſucceed,
" My utmoſt wiſh is crown'd at laſt,
" And I am rich indeed.

" Then riſe, ye raging tempeſts! riſe,
" And fortune's gifts deſtroy;
" Thy HENRY gains the nobleſt prize,
" He feels the pureſt joy.

" Extatic bliſs his heart ſhall prove,
" From care and ſorrow free,
" While bleſt with Innocence and Love,
" With boundleſs wealth in thee.

" Sweet Hope o'er every morn ſhall ſhed
" Her ſoul-enliv'ning ray,
" Celeſtial Peace, by virtue led,
" Shall cheer each cloſing day.

" Far from ambition's train remov'd,
" And pleaſure's giddy throng,
" Our blameleſs hours, by Heaven approv'd,
" Shall gently glide along.

" O may I catch that ſacred fire
" Which animates thy breaſt;
" Like thee to nobleſt heights aſpire,
" Like thee be truly bleſt!

" Thus ſhall the pleaſing charm of love
" Bright virtue's force increaſe—
" Thus every changing ſcene ſhall prove
" The road to laſting peace.

" And thus, thro' life, our hearts ſhall know
" A more than mortal joy,
" Beyond what fortune can beſtow,
" Or time, or death, deſtroy."

ENVY, A FRAGMENT.

ARGUMENT.

ENVY, *her character*; *her dwelling near the road that leads to the Temple of* VIRTUE. *A fruit tree gives ſhelter and refreſhment to travellers*; *ſhe tears all the buds to prevent it, &c. A lamb takes ſhelter from the ſnow in her hut*; *ſhe tears down the roof that it may not protect him, and leaves it ſo that none may ever find ſhelter there. Diſturbs all travellers. Schemes laid to defeat her. Nothing will do but the ſhield of* TRUTH, *which is ſo bright that none dare carry it, becauſe they cannot themſelves ſtand it. At laſt* INNOCENCE, *attended by* MODESTY, *undertakes it.* ENVY *attacks them with fury, and throws a dart, which, inſtead of hurting, only ſtrikes off the veil which hid the face of* MODESTY, *and makes all the world admire her.* ENVY *bluſhes for the firſt time.* INNOCENCE *holds up the ſhield.* ENVY *is dazzled, and becomes almoſt blind*; *ſhe flies from them, and wanders about the world, trying to hurt every body, but being too blind to direct her darts, though they ſometimes do harm, yet they always recoil upon herſelf, and give her the ſevereſt wounds.*

ENVY,

A FRAGMENT.

I.

YE pleaſing dreams of heavenly Poeſy,
Which oft have ſooth'd my throbbing heart to reſt,
And in ſoft ſtrains of ſweeteſt minſtrelſy
Have lull'd the tumults of this anxious breaſt,
Or charm'd my ſoul with pleaſures unpoſſeſs'd:
How ſweet with you to wander all the day
In airy ſcenes, by Fancy's pencil dreſs'd,
To trace the windings of her devious way,
To feel her magic force, and own her boundleſs ſway.

II.

See at her call the awful forms ariſe
Of ancient heroes, moulder'd in the tomb;
Again Vice trembles through her deep diſguiſe,
And Virtue triumphs in a dungeon's gloom,
Or ſmiles undaunted at a tyrant's doom.
Again ſhe waves on high her magic wand——
The faded glories riſe of Greece and Rome,
The heavenly Muſes lead a tuneful band,
And freedom's fearleſs ſons unnumber'd hoſts withſtand.

III.

And now to ſofter ſcenes my ſteps ſhe leads,
The ſweet retreats of Innocence and Love,
Where freſheſt flow'rets deck th' enamell'd meads,
And Nature's muſic warbles through the grove;
'Mongſt rocks and caverns now ſhe loves to rove,
And mark the torrents tumbling from on high,
And now ſhe ſoars on daring wings, above
The vaſt expanſe of yon ethereal ſky,
Or darts through diſtant time, and long futurity.

IV.

And oft, when weary nature ſinks oppreſs'd
Beneath the load of ſickneſs and of pain,
When ſweeteſt muſic cannot lull to reſt,
And preſent pleaſure ſpreads her charms in vain,
Bright Fancy comes, and burſts the mental chain,
And bears the ſoul on airy wings away;
Well pleas'd it wanders o'er her golden reign,
Enjoys the tranſports of ſome diſtant day,
And Pain's ſuſpended force a moment owns her ſway.

V.

Ev'n in the lonelieſt wild, the deepeſt ſhade,
Remote from ev'ry pleaſing, ſocial ſcene,
New wonders riſe, by Fancy's pow'r diſplay'd:
She paints each heavenly grace with gentle mein,
Celeſtial Truth, and Innocence ſerene,
And Hope, exulting ſtill in future joy,
Though dangers threat and tempeſts intervene;
And Patience, ever calm though cares annoy,
And ſweet Benevolence, whoſe pleaſures ne'er can cloy.

VI.

In dangers firm, in triumphs ever mild,
The awful form of Fortitude appears;
Pure Joy, of heavenly Piety the child,
Serenely ſmiles, unmov'd by grief or fears;
Soft Mercy dries affliction's bitter tears,
Still bleſt in ev'ry bleſſing ſhe beſtows;
While Friendſhip's gentle voice each ſorrow cheers:
Sweet are her joys, and pleaſing e'en her woes,
When warm'd by Virtue's fire the ſacred ardour glows.

VII.

Thus Fancy's pow'r in ſolitude can charm,
Can rouſe each latent virtue in the heart,
Preſerve the heavenly ſpark for ever warm,
And guiltleſs pleaſures ev'ry hour impart.
Yet oh! beware—leſt Vice with fatal art
Should taint the gift for Virtue's aid deſign'd;
Leſt Fancy's ſting ſhould point affliction's dart,
Or empty ſhadows check th' aſpiring mind,
By vain delights ſubdu'd, or vainer fears confin'd.

VIII.

For oft when Virtue prompts the gen'rous deed,
And points the way to gain the glorious prize,
Imagin'd ills her upward flight impede,
And all around fantaſtic terrors riſe:
Ev'n Vice itſelf can Fancy's pow'r diſguiſe
With borrow'd charms, enchanting to betray:—
Oh! then let Reaſon watch with cautious eyes,
Secure its active force in Virtue's way,
Then ſlack the rein at will, and free let Fancy ſtray.

IX.

Thus muſing late at evening's ſilent hour,
My wand'ring footſteps ſought the lonely ſhade;
And gently led by Fancy's magic pow'r,
Methought at once, to diſtant realms convey'd,
New ſcenes appear'd, by mortal ne'er ſurvey'd;
Such as were fabled erſt in fairy land,
Where elfin Knights their proweſs oft diſplay'd,
And mighty Love inſpir'd the warlike band
To ſeek adventures hard at Beauty's high command.

X.

Full many a path there was on ev'ry ſide,
Theſe waſte and wild, and thoſe beſet with flow'rs;
Where many a pilgrim wander'd far and wide,
Some bent to ſeek gay Pleaſure's roſy bow'rs,
And ſome to gain Ambition's lofty tow'rs:
While others view their labours with diſdain,
And prize alone the gifts which Fortune ſhow'rs;
With careleſs ſteps ſome wander o'er the plain,
And ſome with ardour ſtrive bright Virtue's hill to gain.

XI.

But many foes in ev'ry path were ſeen,
Who ſtrove by ev'ry art to ſtop the way:
Here Indolence appear'd with vacant mein,
And painted forms of terror and diſmay;
And there the Paſſions roſe in dread array,
And fill'd with clouds and darkneſs all the air;
While empty fears and hopes alike betray,
And Pride with Folly join'd, deſtructive pair!
Drew many from each path, then left them to deſpair.

XII.

Yet ſtill diſtinguiſh'd o'er the hoſtile band,
By all deteſted, and to all a foe,
Pale ENVY roſe: while, trembling in her hand,
Her poiſon'd ſhaft ſtill aim'd ſome deadly blow,
Her eyes ſtill wander'd in purſuit of woe:
For her, in vain riſes the cheerful morn,
In vain the flow'rs with freſheſt luſtre glow,
Vain all the charms which Nature's face adorn:
They cannot cheer a heart with ceaſeleſs anguiſh torn.

XIII.

Beſide the way that leads to Virtue's ſhrine,
This wicked hag her fav'rite dwelling choſe,
Around her walls did baneful nightſhade twine,
And twiſted thorns did all her hut compoſe;
And ſtill from morning's dawn to ev'ning's cloſe,
Some horrid purpoſe would her thoughts employ;
For never could her heart enjoy repoſe,
Nor e'er her reſtleſs ſpirit taſte of joy,
Save when her cruel arts could others' peace deſtroy.

XIV.

The ſprightly voice of guiltleſs Pleaſure's train,
The pleaſing ſmile which Peace and Virtue wear,
Whoſe gentle force might charm the ſenſe of pain,
Suſpend diſtreſs, and ſmooth the brow of care,
Still with new pangs her cruel heart would tear:
But when ſhe heard Affliction's bitter cries,
Or view'd the horrid form of dark Deſpair,
A tranſient gladneſs lighten'd in her eyes—
But tranſient ſtill and vain are Envy's wretched joys.

* * * * * *

ON THE

NEW YEAR.

'TIS paſt: another year for ever gone
Proclaims the end of all;—with awful voice
It calls the ſoul to thought. Awhile ſhe turns
From preſent ſcenes, and wanders o'er the paſt;
Or, darting forward, ſtrives to pierce the veil
Which hides from mortal eyes the time to come.

O Thou, to grateful mem'ry ever dear!
Whom fond affection ſtill delights to name!
Whom ſtill my heart exults to call 'My Friend!'

In fancy yet be preſent.——Oft with Thee
In many a lonely walk and ſilent ſhade
My ſoul holds converſe!—oft recalls the hours
When pleas'd attention hung upon thy voice,
While the pure dictates of celeſtial Truth
In Friendſhip's gentleſt accents charm'd my ear,
And ſooth'd each anxious thought, and ſhew'd the way
Which leads to preſent peace and future bliſs:—
Though now far diſtant, yet in thought be near,
And ſhare with me reflection's ſacred hour.
And oh! to Thee may each revolving year
Its choiceſt bleſſings bring! May heavenly peace,
To every thoughtleſs mind unknown—purſued
In vain through ſcenes of viſionary good—
That peace which dwells with piety alone,
Still on thy ſteps through every ſtage attend!
And pureſt joy from Virtue's ſacred ſource,
Bleſt in the thought of many a well-ſpent day,
Bleſt in the proſpect of unbounded bliſs,
Cheer every hour, and triumph in the laſt!

As when a traveller, who long has rov'd
Through many a varied path, at length attains
Some eminence, from whence he views the land
Which late he paſs'd—groves, ſtreams, and lawns appear,
And hills with flocks adorn'd, and lofty woods;
And ev'ry charm which Nature's hand beſtows
In rich profuſion decks the ſmiling ſcene—
No more he views the rugged thorny way,
The ſteep aſcent, the ſlippery path, which led
High o'er the brink of ſome rude precipice;
Unnumber'd beauties, ſcarce obſerv'd before,
At once combine to charm his raptur'd view,
And backward turning, oft in tranſport loſt,
His toils and dangers paſt no more are felt,
But long and tedious ſeems the road to come:——
Thus oft, when youth is fled, when health decays,
And cares perplex, and trifling pleaſures cloy;
Sick of vain hopes, and tir'd of preſent ſcenes,
The ſoul returns to joys ſhe feels no more,
And backward caſts her view. Then Fancy comes

In Memory's form, and gilds the long-paſt days,
Recalls the faded images of joy,
Paints every happy moment happier ſtill;
But hides each anxious fear, and heartfelt pang,
Each pleaſure loſt, and hope purſued in vain,
Which oft o'erſpread with gloom the gayeſt hour,
And taught ev'n Youth and Innocence to mourn.

O Happineſs, in every varied ſcene,
Thro' toil, thro' danger, and thro' pain purſued!
Yet oft when preſent ſcarce enjoy'd;—when paſt,
Recall'd to wound the heart, to blaſt the ſweets
Yet given to life:——How are thy votaries,
Miſled by vain deluſions, thus deceiv'd!
Let riſing Hope, for ever on the wing,
Still point to diſtant good, to perfect bliſs;
While, conſcious of ſuperior pow'rs, the ſoul
Exulting hears her call, and longs to ſoar
To ſcenes of real and unfading joy.
Yet while on earth ſome feeble rays are ſhed

To cheer the mournful gloom, O let not man
Reject the proffer'd gift!—with innocence
And gratitude enjoy'd, each preſent good
Beyond the fleeting moment may extend
Its pleaſing force.——When Nature's varied charms,
In all the gayeſt luſtre of the ſpring,
Delight the wond'ring view;—while every grove
With artleſs muſic hails the riſing morn,
The ſportive lambkins play, the ſhepherd ſings,
Creation ſmiles, and every boſom feels
The general joy;—O ſay, from ſcenes like theſe
Shall not the ſweet impreſſions ſtill remain
Of Innocence and Peace, and ſocial Love,
To bleſs the future hour?——When the glad heart
Exulting beats at Friendſhip's ſacred call,
And feels what language never can expreſs;
While every joy exalted and refin'd,
And each tumultuous paſſion charm'd to peace,
Own the ſweet influence of its matchleſs power;
(That power which ev'n o'er grief itſelf can ſhed

A heavenly beam, when pleaſure courts in vain,
And wealth and honours paſs unheeded by:)
Shall joys like theſe, on Virtue's baſis rais'd,
Like Fancy's vain deluſions paſs away?
O no!—Nor time, nor abſence, ſhall efface
The ever dear remembrance;—ev'n when paſt,
When deep Affliction mourns the bleſſing gone,
Yet ſhall that bleſſing be for ever priz'd,
For ever felt.——When heaven-born Charity
Expands the heart, and prompts the liberal hand
To ſoothe diſtreſs, ſupply the various wants
Of friendleſs poverty; and dry the tears
Which bathe the widow's cheek, whoſe deareſt hope
Is ſnatch'd away, and helpleſs orphans aſk
That aid ſhe cannot give;—Say, ſhall the joy
(Pure as the ſacred ſource from whence it ſprings)
Which then exalts the ſoul, ſhall *this* expire?——
The graſs ſhall wither, and the flower ſhall fade,
But Heaven's eternal Word ſhall ſtill remain,
And Heaven's eternal Word pronounc'd it bleſt.

Ye calm delights of Innocence and Peace!
Ye joys by Virtue taught, by Heaven approv'd!
Is there a heart, which loſt in ſelfiſh views
Ne'er felt your pleaſing force, ne'er knew to ſhare
Another's joy, or heave a tender ſigh
For ſorrows not its own;—which all around
Beholds a dreary void, where Hope perhaps
May dart a feeble ray, but knows not where
To point its aim? (For real good, unknown
While preſent, is purſued, but ne'er attain'd.)
Is there a heart like this? At ſuch a ſight,
Let ſoft Compaſſion drop a ſilent tear,
And Charity reluctant turn away
From woes ſhe ne'er ſhall feel, nor can relieve.
But oh! let thoſe whom Heaven has taught to feel
The pureſt joys which mortals e'er can know,
With gratitude recall the bleſſings given,
Though grief ſucceed; nor e'er with envy view
That calm which cold indifference ſeems to ſhare,
And think thoſe happy who can never loſe

That good they never knew:—for joys like theſe
Refine, ennoble, elevate the mind;
And never, never ſhall ſucceeding woes
Efface the bleſt impreſſion:—Grief itſelf
Retains it ſtill; while Hope exulting comes
To ſnatch them from the power of time and death,
And tell the ſoul—*They never ſhall decay.*

When Youth and Pleaſure gild the ſmiling morn,
And Fancy ſcatters roſes all around,
What bliſsful viſions riſe! In proſpect bright
Awhile they charm the ſoul: but ſcarce attain'd,
The gay deluſion fades.——Another comes,
The ſoft enchantment is again renew'd,
And Youth again enjoys the airy dreams
Of fancied good.——But ah! how oft ev'n theſe
By ſtern Affliction's hand are ſnatch'd away,
Ere yet experience proves them vain, and ſhews
That earthly pleaſures to a heavenly mind
Are but the ſhadows of ſubſtantial bliſs!

But Pleaſure rais'd by Virtue's powerful charm,
Above each tranſient view, each meaner aim,
Can bleſs the preſent hour, and lead the ſoul
To brighter proſpects, rich in every good,
Which man can feel, or Heaven itſelf beſtow.

While thus returning o'er the long-paſt ſcenes
Of former life, the mind recalls to view
The ſtrange viciſſitudes of grief and joy,
O may the grateful heart for ever own
The various bleſſings given! nor dare repine
At ills which all muſt ſhare; or deem thoſe ills
From chance or fate (thoſe empty names which veil
The ignorance of man) could ever flow;
But warn'd alike by Pleaſure and by Pain,
That higher joys await the virtuous mind
Than aught on earth can yield: in every change
Adore that Power which rules the whole, and gives,
In Pleaſure's charms, in Sorrow's keeneſt pangs,
The means of good, the hope—the pledge of bliſs.

Thou riſing year, now opening to my view,
Yet wrapp'd in darkneſs—whither doſt thou lead?
What is Futurity?——It is a time
When joys, unknown to former life, *may* ſhed
Their brighteſt beams on each ſucceeding day;
When Health again *may* bloom, and Pleaſure ſmile,
(By Pain no more allay'd) and new delights
On every changing ſeaſon ſtill attend;
Each morn returning wake the ſoul to joy
From balmy ſlumbers, undiſturb'd by care;
Succeſs ſtill wait on Hope, and every hour
In peace and pleaſure gently glide away.——
But ah! how rare on earth are years like this!
In the dark proſpect of Futurity,
Far other ſcenes than theſe may yet remain:
Affliction there may aim her keeneſt ſhafts
To tear the heart,—while pain and ſickneſs waſte
The feeble frame by ſlow conſuming pangs,
And eaſe and comfort loſt are ſought in vain;
For there, perhaps, no friendly voice may cheer

The tedious hours of grief, but all around
Expiring joys and blaſted hopes appear,
New woes ſucceed to woes, and every good
On earth be ſnatch'd away.——How then ſhall man
Salute the riſing year?—Shall cheerful hope
Receive the welcome gueſt; or terror wait
In ſpeechleſs anguiſh the impending ſtorm?——
Preſumptuous mortal, ceaſe:—O turn thine eyes
On the dark manſions of the ſilent dead,
And check the bold enquiry;—never more
The riſing ſun may ſhed its beams on thee;
Perhaps, ev'n now, the fatal hour is come
Which ends at once thy earthly hopes and fears,
And ſeals thy doom through vaſt eternity.—
How awful is the thought! and who ſhall ſay
It is not juſt? What mortal ſhall diſcloſe
The dark decrees of Heaven?——But grant, to life
A longer date aſſign'd, another year
On earth beſtow'd; in deepeſt ſhades conceal'd
Its good or ill remains; no mortal hand

Can draw the veil which hides it from thy view.
Hence then, ye airy dreams by fancy led!
Vain hopes, and vainer fears—deceive no more!
In native luſtre bright let Truth appear,
With her pure beams illume the dark unknown,
And ſhew what man of future days can know.

What is Futurity?——It is a time
By Heaven in mercy giv'n, where all may find
Their beſt, their trueſt good,—the means, the power,
To elevate their nature, to exert
Each nobler faculty, and ſtill to riſe
In every virtue.——Here the beſt may find
Improvement: for what mortal e'er attain'd
Perfection's utmoſt point?—And here ev'n thoſe,
Who long by vice and folly led aſtray
Forſook the paths of wiſdom and of truth,
May yet return, and with new ardour ſeek
That long-neglected good, which, though deſpis'd,
Rejected once, may here be yet attain'd.——

Know then, whoe'er thou art, on whom high Heaven
Another year of life will now beſtow,
That year may lead thee to eternal peace,
May cancel follies paſt, redeem the time
In thoughtleſs diſſipation once abus'd,
Diſpel the ſhades of vice, the gloom of care,
Call forth each latent virtue, and impart
New ſtrength, new hopes, and joys which ne'er
ſhall fail.

Then hail, bright proſpect of the riſing year!
The ſchool of virtue, and the road to bliſs!——
No more the ſhades of doubt are ſpread around;
No more ideal pleaſures deck the ſcene
With airy forms of good, which Fancy's ſelf
Scarce dares enjoy; no more by terror led
A train of woes in long ſucceſſion riſe,
And deepeſt horror o'er the time to come
Extends her baleful influence;—by the power
Of Truth ſubdued, at once they diſappear,

And ſurer hopes, and brighter views ariſe,
Than Pleaſure e'er could give, or Pain deſtroy,
To chaſe each vain deluſion far away,
And ſhew the glorious prize which future days
May yet attain.——This, this alone is ſure:
The reſt, involv'd in dark uncertainty,
But mocks our ſearch:—But oh! how bleſt the path
(Whate'er it be) which leads to endleſs reſt!——

Then let Affliction come;—ſhall man complain
Of ſeeming ills, which Heaven in mercy ſends
To check his vain purſuits, exalt his views,
Improve his virtues, and direct the ſoul
To ſeek that aid which ne'er can fail, that aid
Which all who ſeek ſhall find? Oh! in the hour
Of deepeſt horror, when the throbbing heart,
Oppreſs'd with anguiſh, can ſuſtain no more,
May Patience ſtill, and Reſignation, come
To cheer the gloom!—not ſuch as his who boaſts
Superior powers, a mind above the reach

Of human weakneſs, yet with ardour ſeeks
The frail ſupport of tranſitory praiſe;—
Or his, who trembling at an unknown power,
Submits in ſilence to Omnipotence,
And ſtruggling checks the murmurs of his breaſt;—
But that ſweet Peace, that heartfelt Confidence,
(By heavenly hope and filial love inſpir'd,
In Truth's inviolable word ſecure)
Which pain and ſorrow never can deſtroy;
Which ſmile triumphant in the gloom of woe,
And own a Father's pow'r, a Father's love
O'er all preſiding.——Bleſt in thoughts like theſe
The mourner's heart ſtill feels a ſecret joy,
Which pleaſure ne'er could yield:—no murmurs now
Diſturb its peace;—but every wiſh reſign'd
To wiſdom, power, and goodneſs infinite,
Celeſtial hope and comfort beam around
O'er all the proſpect of ſucceeding time,
And never-fading glories cloſe the ſcene.

O THOU, great ſource of every good! by whom
This heart was taught to beat, theſe thoughts to range
O'er the wide circuit of the univerſe,
To ſoar beyond the fartheſt bounds of time,
And pant for bliſs which earth could ne'er beſtow;—
While worlds unnumber'd tremble at thy power,
And hoſts celeſtial own their loftieſt ſtrain
Too weak to tell thy praiſe;—O how ſhall man
E'er lift his voice to Thee?——Yet at thy call
Thy ſervant comes. O hear my humble prayer:—
By thy Almighty power direct, ſuſtain
My feeble efforts; and whate'er the lot
To me on earth aſſign'd, O guide me ſtill,
By the bleſt light of thy eternal truth,
Through every varied ſcene of joy or woe;
Support my weakneſs by thy mighty aid,
And lead my ſoul to Peace—to Bliſs—to Thee!

ESSAYS.

ON

SENSIBILITY.

IT is a common obſervation, that in this world we ſtand more in need of comforts than of pleaſures. Pain, ſickneſs, loſſes, diſappointments, ſorrows of every kind, are ſown ſo thick in the path of life, that thoſe who have attempted to teach the way to be happy, have in general beſtowed more attention on the means of ſupporting evil, than of ſeeking good;—nay, many have gone ſo far as

as to recommend inſenſibility as the moſt deſirable ſtate of mind, upon a ſuppoſition, that evil (or the appearance of evil) ſo far predominates, that the good, in general, is not ſufficient to counterbalance it, and that therefore, by leſſening the ſenſe of both, we ſhould be gainers on the whole, and might purchaſe conſtant eaſe, and freedom from all anxiety, by giving up pleaſures, which are always uncertain, and often lead to the ſevereſt ſufferings: and this, taking all circumſtances together, it has been thought would be a deſirable exchange.

On the ſame principle much ſerious advice has been beſtowed on the young, the gay, and the happy, to teach them—to be moderate in their purſuits and wiſhes, that they may avoid the pangs of diſappointment in caſe they ſhould not ſucceed;—to allay the pleaſure they might

might receive from the enjoyment of every good they poſſeſs, by dwelling continually on the thought of its uncertainty;—to check the beſt affections of their hearts, in order to ſecure themſelves from the pain they may afterwards occaſion;—in ſhort, to deprive themſelves of the good they might enjoy, from a fear of the evil which may follow:—which is ſomething like adviſing a man to keep his eyes conſtantly ſhut, as the moſt certain way to avoid the ſight of any diſagreeable object.

Thoſe on the other hand who are in a ſtate of affliction, are adviſed to moderate their grief, by conſidering, that they knew beforehand the uncertainty of every good they poſſeſſed;—that nothing has befallen them but what is the common lot of mankind;—that the evil conſiſts chiefly in the opinion they

they form of it;—that what is independent on themſelves, cannot really touch them but by their own fault; and their concern cannot make things better than they are.

Many other conſiderations of the ſame kind are added, to which probably no perſon under the immediate influence of real affliction ever paid the leaſt attention; and which, even if they are allowed their greateſt force, could only ſilence complaints, and lead the mind into a ſtate of inſenſibility, but could never produce the ſmalleſt degree of comfort or of happineſs.

In order to determine whether this be really the way to paſs through life with the greateſt eaſe and ſatisfaction, it may not be uſeleſs to enquire in what ſtate the mind of man would be, ſuppoſing it really to have attained that inſen-

inſenſibility, both as to pain and pleaſure, which has been repreſented as ſo deſirable:—I ſpeak of a mind poſſeſſed of its full powers and faculties, and capable of exerting them; for there may be ſome who, from natural incapacity, or want of education, are really incapable of it, and can drudge on through life with ſcarce any feelings or apprehenſions beyond the preſent moment:—But if theſe are ſuppoſed to be the happieſt of mankind, then the end of the argument will be,

"In happineſs the beaſt excels the man,
"The worm excels the beaſt, the clod the worm."

And it ſeems ſcarce poſſible to ſuppoſe any rational creature (not under the immediate influence of paſſion) to be really ſo far convinced of this, as to wiſh to exchange his ſituation in the ſcale of being with the beaſt or the clod.

If

If then we ſuppoſe the mind in full poſſeſſion of its powers, is it poſſible to ſuppoſe that the way to enjoy happineſs, or even peace, is by preventing their exertion? If poſitive pain and pleaſure are taken away, if all the objects propoſed to it make no impreſſion, will the mind therefore be at eaſe? Far from it ſurely. On the contrary, it will be torn in pieces by wiſhes which will have no object whereon to fix;—it will feel in itſelf powers and capacities for happineſs: but finding nothing to make it happy, thoſe very powers will make it miſerable;—having no motive for action, no object to purſue, every riſing day will preſent a blank, which it will be impoſſible to fill up with any thing that can give pleaſure; and the wiſh of every morning will be, that the day were paſt, though there is no proſpect that the next will produce any thing more ſatisfactory.

Could

Could it be poſſible for any perſon really to have attained to ſuch a ſtate as this, inſtead of finding it a ſtate of eaſe and ſatisfaction, we ſhould ſee him weary of himſelf and all around him, unhappy with nothing to complain of, and without any hope of being ever otherwiſe, becauſe he would have no determinate wiſh, in the accompliſhment of which he could promiſe himſelf any enjoyment.

But, happily for mankind, a ſtate like this is not to be attained by any thinking perſon; and thoſe who place their notion of happineſs in mere freedom from ſuffering, muſt be reduced to envy the happineſs of the beaſts of the field;—for it is not the happineſs of man.

Thoſe, indeed, who from a ſtate of exceſſive ſuffering are ſuddenly relieved, and reſtored to eaſe of body and mind, may, at the time,

feel more joy from that eaſe than they would have felt from the greateſt poſitive pleaſure; but then that joy will be tranſient indeed, ſince it ariſes only from a compariſon of paſt ſufferings, the ſenſe of which is quickly loſt; and as ſoon as the mind returns to its natural ſtate, it feels again the want of that enjoyment for which it was formed, and becomes miſerable, not from any poſitive ſufferings, but merely from the want of happineſs.

Thoſe who take pleaſure in arguments which anſwer no other purpoſe than to exerciſe their ingenuity, may amuſe themſelves with diſputing whether this unextinguiſhable thirſt after happineſs be really a deſirable gift, and whether it might not have been happier for man, to have been formed without that activity of mind which prompts him continually to ſeek for ſome enjoyment. But to thoſe who

who feel its force, it is ſurely a more important point to enquire how it may beſt be ſatisfied; and whether it may not be poſſible to regulate thoſe affections which they cannot ſuppreſs, and, by directing them to proper objects, to find in them a ſource of happineſs, which, though it can neither prevent ſufferings, nor take away the ſenſe of them, may yet be felt at the ſame time, and ſerve in a great degree to counterbalance the effect of them.

It muſt, I believe, be allowed, that every man, who reflects on his own ſituation, will find that it has its pleaſures and its pains,—unmixed happineſs or miſery not being the lot of this life, but reſerved for a future ſtate. The happineſs of life muſt then be eſtimated by the proportion its joys bear to its ſorrows; and if what has been before ſuppoſed con-

cerning the ſtate of the mind be juſt, he will not be found to be the happieſt man who has the feweſt ſorrows, but he whoſe joys overbalance his ſorrows in the greateſt degree.

This then ſhould be our aim in the purſuit of happineſs:—not to conquer the ſenſe of ſuffering, for that is impoſſible; not to ſuppreſs our deſires and hopes, for that (if it were poſſible) would only debaſe the mind, not make it happy; but to cultivate every faculty of the ſoul which may prove a ſource of innocent delight; to endeavour as far as poſſible to keep the mind open to a ſenſe of pleaſure, inſtead of ſullenly rejecting all, becauſe we cannot enjoy exactly what we wiſh; —above all, to ſecure to ourſelves a laſting fund of real pleaſures, which may compenſate thoſe afflictions they cannot prevent, and

make

make us not inſenſible, but happy in the midſt of them.

It is very certain that nothing can fully do this, except Religion, and the glorious proſpects it offers to our hopes; this is the only foundation of laſting happineſs, the only ſource of never-failing comfort. While our beſt affections are fixed on any thing in this world, they muſt always give us pain, becauſe they will find nothing which can fully ſatisfy them; but when once they are fixed on Infinite Perfection as their ultimate object, the ſubordinate exerciſes of them will furniſh many ſources of pleaſure and advantage, and ſhould be cultivated both with a view to preſent and future happineſs.

It ſeems ſtrange to obſerve, that there are few, if any, in the world, who enjoy all the

bleſſings which are beſtowed upon them, and make their ſituation in life as happy as it might be. Wherever the ſelfiſh paſſions are indulged to exceſs, this muſt always be the conſequence; for none can be happy while they make others miſerable.

Whoever is poſſeſſed of any degree of power, from the greateſt monarch on the throne to the maſter of the meaneſt cottage, muſt depend for his happineſs on thoſe over whom that power is exerciſed; and, whether he will or no, muſt ſhare in the ſufferings which he inflicts, and feel the want of that ſatisfaction, which he might have received from a different employment of his power.

The truth of this obſervation has been experienced by all who ever endeavoured to purchaſe their own happineſs at the expence of

of that of others. But even where this is not the caſe, where the intentions are good, and the pleaſures of life are not embittered by the ſenſe of guilt, it often happens that diſappointments bring on diſguſt; the pleaſures which were expected are not found; and therefore thoſe which might be found, are undervalued;—the mind is diſſatisfied, and ſeeks for reaſons to juſtify itſelf for being ſo; and when ſorrows are ſought for, it is not difficult to find them.

Such a diſpoſition can poiſon every pleaſure, and add numberleſs imaginary evils to thoſe which muſt inevitably be met with in the path of life. By degrees the activity of the ſoul is loſt; every ſorrow appears inſupportable; every difficulty unconquerable; no object is thought worth purſuing; and life itſelf becomes a burden.

To

To guard againſt the fatal effects which diſappointments are apt to have upon the mind, is a point of the utmoſt conſequence towards paſſing through life with any tolerable degree of comfort and ſatisfaction; for diſappointments, more or leſs, muſt be the lot of all.

At the firſt entrance into the world, when the imagination is active, the affections warm, and the heart a ſtranger to deceit, and conſequently to ſuſpicion, what delightful dreams of happineſs are formed! Whatever may be the object in which that happineſs is ſuppoſed to conſiſt, that object is purſued with ardour; —the gay and thoughtleſs ſeek for it in diſſipation and amuſement; the ambitious, in power, fame, and honours; the affectionate, in love and friendſhip:—but how few are there who find in any of theſe objects that happineſs which they expected!

Pleaſure,

Pleaſure, fame, &c. even when they are in any degree obtained, ſtill leave a void in the ſoul, which continually reminds the poſſeſſor, that this is not the happineſs for which he was formed; and even the beſt affections are liable to numberleſs diſappointments, and often productive of the ſevereſt pangs.

The unſuſpecting heart forms attachments, before reaſon is capable of judging whether the obects of them are ſuch as are qualified to make it happy; and it often happens, that the fatal truth is not diſcovered till the affections are engaged too far to be recalled, and then the diſappointment muſt prove a laſting ſorrow.

But it is not neceſſary to enumerate the diſappointments which generally attend on the purſuits of youth; and indeed the proſpect is too painful to dwell upon: the intention of mentioning

mentioning them is only to guard againſt the effects they may produce.

The imagination has painted an object, which perhaps is not to be found in this world; that object has been purſued in vain: but ſhall we therefore conclude, that no object is worth purſuing, and ſink into a liſtleſs, inactive ſtate, in which we muſt grow weary of ourſelves, and all the world?

The young are too apt to fancy that the affections of their hearts will prove the ſource of nothing but pleaſure;—thoſe who are farther advanced in life, are much too apt to run into the contrary extreme. The error of the firſt, even taking it in the worſt light, is productive of ſome pleaſure as well as pain; that of the laſt, ſerves only to throw a damp over every pleaſure, and can be productive of nothing

nothing but pain. It leads indeed to the moſt fatal conſequences, ſince it tends to make *ſelf* the only object; and the heart which is merely ſelfiſh muſt ever be incapable of virtue and of happineſs, and a ſtranger to all the joys of affection and benevolence; without which the happieſt ſtate in this world muſt be inſipid, and which may prove the ſource of many pleaſures, even in the midſt of the ſevereſt afflictions.

In every ſtate of life, in ſpite of every diſappointment, *theſe* ſhould ſtill be cheriſhed and encouraged; for though they may not always beſtow ſuch pleaſures as the romantic imaginations of youth had painted, yet they will ſtill beſtow ſuch as can be found in nothing elſe in this world; and indeed they are neceſſary, in order to give a reliſh to every enjoyment.

I mention

I mention an affectionate and a benevolent diſpoſition together, becauſe I believe, when they are genuine, they never can be ſeparated; and, perhaps, the diſappointments ſo often complained of, may ſometimes be occaſioned by a miſtake upon this ſubject; for there is a ſelfiſh attachment, which often uſurps the name of friendſhip, though it is indeed ſomething totally different. It is an attachment like that which a muſician feels for his inſtrument, or a virtuoſo for his pictures and his ſtatues;—the affection is not fixed on the object itſelf, but merely on the pleaſure received from it. Such an attachment as this is liable to numberleſs little jealouſies and uneaſineſſes;—the ſmalleſt doubt is ſufficient to awaken its fears; the moſt trifling error excites its reſentment, and that reſentment is immediately expreſſed by complaints, and often by upbraidings.

True

True friendſhip is not indeed leſs quick-ſighted; it watches with a tender and anxious ſolicitude to promote the welfare and happineſs of the object which it loves; it is a kind of microſcope which diſcovers every ſpeck; but then the diſcovery does not excite anger and reſentment, ſtill leſs could it lead to unkindneſs and upbraidings;—it inſpires a concern like that which we feel for our own errors and imperfections, and produces an earneſt deſire and ſincere endeavour to remove them.

With ſuch a friend, the heart may appear juſt as it is, and enjoy the pleaſure of an unbounded confidence;—but with thoſe whoſe affection is founded on a regard to themſelves, every word and action muſt be weighed, and the fear of giving offence muſt throw a reſtraint over every converſation.

The

The real friend will be diſpoſed to love all thoſe who are any way connected with the object of his affection; he will be ſincerely intereſted for their welfare, and will wiſh to gain their affection, and promote their happineſs.

The ſelfiſh will view them with a jealous eye, continually apprehenſive that they may rob him of ſome part of a treaſure which he would wiſh to engroſs.

It would be eaſy to carry on the contraſt much farther; for indeed it might be ſhewn in almoſt every inſtance. But what has been ſaid may be ſufficient to ſhew how very wide is the difference between that ſort of attachment of which a ſelfiſh heart is capable, and that which alone deſerves the name of real friendſhip; though it is often too indiſcriminately given to both: the one is an enemy general

to general benevolence; the other flows from the ſame ſource, and belongs to the ſame character.

Such a diſpoſition, it muſt be allowed, may prove the ſource of many pleaſures; but it may be objected, that it will prove the ſource of many ſorrows alſo: and indeed, in this imperfect ſtate, this truth is too certain to be diſputed. But if it can be proved, that on the whole it affords more joys than ſorrows, that will be ſufficient to the preſent purpoſe; if it be allowed that the happineſs of man muſt conſiſt in poſitive enjoyment, not in mere freedom from ſuffering.

And ſurely much more than this might eaſily be proved, ſince it not only can afford pleaſures of the moſt exalted kind, and give new reliſh to every other pleaſure; but even in the

the midſt of the moſt painful ſufferings it ever occaſioned, it can at the ſame time inſpire a ſecret ſatisfaction, of which thoſe who never felt it can hardly form any idea.

With ſuch a diſpoſition, power and riches may be real bleſſings; ſince they furniſh frequent opportunities of beſtowing happineſs, and conſequently of enjoying it in the higheſt degree. But even without theſe advantages, the truly benevolent, in whatever ſituation in life they may be placed, will find numberleſs ſources of pleaſure and delight, which to others muſt be for ever unknown. All the happineſs they ſee, becomes in ſome ſort their own; and even, under the preſſure of the greateſt afflictions, they can rejoice at the good which others enjoy; and far from repining at the compariſon, they find in the thought of it a pleaſure and ſatisfaction, to which

which no ſuffering of their own can render them inſenſible; but which, on the contrary, prove a powerful cordial to help them to ſupport thoſe ſufferings.

Even the face of inanimate nature fills them with a ſatisfaction which the inſenſible can never know, while they are warmed with gratitude to the Giver of every good, and joy at the thought that their fellow-creatures ſhare thoſe bleſſings with them. They may even experience ſomething like the pleaſure of beſtowing happineſs, while they rejoice in all that is beſtowed, and feel in their hearts that they would beſtow it if they could.

It is true indeed, that they muſt ſhare in the ſorrows of others, as well as in their joys; but then this may often lead to the heavenly pleaſure of relieving them, if not as fully as

they could wiſh, yet at leaſt in ſome degree; for true benevolence can diſcover numberleſs methods of relieving diſtreſs, which would eſcape the notice of the careleſs and inſenſible. When relief is not in their power, ſome expreſſions of kindneſs, and the appearance of a deſire to give comfort and aſſiſtance, may at leaſt contribute to ſoothe the wounded mind, and they may ſtill enjoy the pleaſure which attends on every endeavour to do good, even on the unſucceſsful; and when they are placed beyond the reach of this, and can only offer up a ſecret prayer for thoſe whoſe ſufferings they cannot alleviate, even this will be attended with a heartfelt ſatisfaction, more than ſufficient to ſuppreſs every wiſh that they could behold the ſorrows of others with indifference, if it were poſſible that ſuch a wiſh could ever ariſe in a truly benevolent heart.

Such

Such a diſpoſition will be a powerful preſervative againſt that wearineſs of mind, which is ſo often an attendant on what is generally eſteemed a happy ſituation in this world.

Thoſe who are freed from cares and anxieties, who are ſurrounded by all the means of enjoyment, and whoſe pleaſures preſent themſelves without being ſought for, are often unhappy in the midſt of all, merely becauſe that activity of mind, in the proper exerciſe of which our happineſs conſiſts, has in them no object on which it may be employed. But when the heart is ſincerely and affectionately intereſted for the good of others, a new ſcene of action is continually open, every moment may be employed in ſome pleaſing and uſeful purſuit. New opportunities of doing good are continually preſenting themſelves; new ſchemes are formed, and ardently purſued;

ſued; and even when they do not ſucceed, though the diſappointment may give pain, yet the pleaſure of ſelf-approbation will remain, and the purſuit will be remembered with ſatisfaction. The next opportunity which offers itſelf will be readily embraced, and will furniſh a freſh ſupply of pleaſures; ſuch pleaſures as are ſecure from that wearineſs and diſguſt, which ſooner or later are the conſequences of all ſuch enjoyments as tend merely to gratify the ſelfiſh paſſions and inclinations, and which always attend on an inactive ſtate of mind, from whatever cauſe it may proceed; whether it may be the effect of ſatiety or diſappointment, of proſperity or deſpair.

Even in the moſt trifling ſcenes of common life, the truly benevolent may find many pleaſures, which would paſs unnoticed by others; and in a converſation, which to the thoughtleſs

thoughtleſs and inattentive would afford only a trifling amuſement, or perhaps no amuſement at all, they may find many ſubjects for pleaſing and uſeful reflections, which may conduce both to their happineſs and advantage; and that not only by being continually upon the watch for every opportunity of doing good to others, even in the moſt trifling inſtances, (which alone would afford a conſtant ſource of pleaſure) but alſo by the enjoyment of all the good they can obſerve in others.

If any action is related, or any expreſſion dropped, which indicates true goodneſs of heart, they will be heard with ſatisfaction; the moſt trifling inſtance of kindneſs and attention will be received with a ſort of pleaſure of which the ſelfiſh can form no idea. Every appearance or deſcription of innocent happi-

neſs will be enjoyed, every expreſſion of real friendſhip and affection will be felt, even though they are not the objects of it.

In ſhort, all the happineſs, and all the virtues of others, are ſources of delight to them; and it is a pleaſing, as well as uſeful exerciſe to the mind, to be employed, when engaged in ſociety, in ſeeking out for theſe;—to trace to their ſpring the little expreſſions of benevolence which often paſs unnoticed;—to diſcover real merit, through the veil which humility and modeſty throw over it;—to admire true greatneſs of mind, even in the meaneſt ſituation in life, or when it exerts itſelf upon occaſions ſuppoſed to be trifling, and therefore, in general, but little attended to.

In theſe, and in numberleſs inſtances of the ſame kind, much real pleaſure might be found, which

which is too generally overlooked, and which might prove the ſource of many advantages both to ourſelves and others; for thoſe who really enjoy the good of others, will certainly wiſh and endeavour to promote it. And by ſuch exerciſes as theſe, the beſt affections of the heart are continually called forth to action, and the pleaſures which they afford may be enjoyed and improved in every different ſituation in life; for theſe are pleaſures, which, more or leſs, are within the reach of all.

In theſe, the rich and proſperous may find that ſatisfaction which they have ſought in vain in ſelfiſh gratifications; and the afflicted may yet enjoy that happineſs which they are too apt to imagine is entirely loſt:—but the ſelfiſh heart can neither enjoy proſperity, nor ſupport affliction; it will be weary and diſ-

ſatisfied

ſatisfied in the firſt, and totally dejected in the laſt.

In order to adminiſter conſolation to the afflicted, the uſual methods are, either to endeavour to leſſen their ſenſe of the evil, by ſhewing them that it is not really ſo great as they imagine; or by comparing it with greater evils endured by others; or elſe to drive it from the thought by the hurry of diſſipation and amuſement.

The firſt of theſe methods may ſerve to diſplay the talents of the perſon who undertakes it; and perhaps ſuch arguments may ſometimes prevail upon vanity to aſſume an appearance of fortitude. But how can he, whoſe heart feels the pangs of real affliction, be convinced by argument that he does not feel it? or what relief can it give to his ſufferings,

ferings, to be told that another ſuffers more? Nor can diſſipation and amuſement afford a more efficacious remedy, ſince in theſe the heart has nothing to do:—in the midſt of the gayeſt ſcenes, and ſurrounded by all that the world calls pleaſure, it will ſhrink into itſelf, and feel its own bitterneſs with redoubled force.

It is vain to endeavour to take from the wretched, the ſenſe of ſuffering; pain and grief muſt be felt; they can neither be ſubdued by argument, nor loſt in diſſipation; and while they remain, it is impoſſible to enjoy that eaſe which by ſome is repreſented as the greateſt good of man—they muſt exclude it:—But muſt they therefore exclude all poſitive happineſs? Surely no. The wounded heart may ſtill be open to enjoyment, and here it muſt ſeek for conſolation; it cannot indeed

indeed be inſenſible of pain, but it may yet be ſenſible of pleaſure. And happy indeed are they who have acquired a reliſh for ſuch pleaſures as pain and ſorrow cannot take away; ſince theſe, ſooner or later, muſt be the lot of all.

Of this kind are the pleaſures of affection and benevolence; they enlarge the heart, they prevent it from dwelling on its own ſorrows, and teach it to ſeek for happineſs in the good of others; and thoſe who in their happieſt days were accuſtomed to do this, will not become inſenſible to ſuch pleaſures, becauſe they are themſelves in a ſtate of ſuffering.

Every inſtance of kindneſs, every friendly endeavour to give eaſe and comfort, will ſtill rejoice the heart; the pleaſure of ſeeing others virtuous and happy, may ſtill be felt; the earneſt

earneſt deſire to make them ſo, may ſtill be cheriſhed; and that deſire is in itſelf a pleaſing ſenſation. The endeavour which it excites affords ſtill higher pleaſure; and when that endeavour is bleſſed with ſucceſs, the benevolent heart will feel a real joy, to which its own ſufferings cannot render it inſenſible.

By every ſuch exertion, the mind will gain new ſtrength, and enjoy new pleaſure; its native vigour, which ſorrow had depreſſed, and which no intereſted views could have called forth to action, will be reſtored by benevolence;—the wounded heart may feel the delight of ſelf-approbation;—in ſhort, the afflicted may enjoy the beſt pleaſures of the happy.

But after all it muſt be allowed, that all our pleaſures, in this imperfect ſtate, even thoſe of the

to others; and in this aim they cannot be diſappointed, though they ſhould prove unſucceſsful; for the honeſt endeavour they may be certain will be accepted.

The fear of loſing the bleſſings they poſſeſs, will not deprive them of the pleaſure of enjoying them; for they remember in whoſe hands they are; they know they ſhall enjoy them as long as is really beſt for them; and that if all elſe were taken from them, they are ſecure of an unfailing reſource, an Almighty Comforter.

They conſider their beſt enjoyments as independent on this world; the pleaſures of friendſhip and benevolence, though here allayed by diſappointment, and interrupted by death, they hope will be renewed hereafter, and

and enjoyed, pure and unmixed, through eternity.

The love and gratitude they feel, the delight they take in every means of expreſſing them, will conſtitute a part of their happineſs hereafter.

The heavenly contemplations which exalt their minds, and make them feel that they were formed for higher enjoyments than this world affords, will raiſe their hopes to that ſtate where alone they can find objects ſuited to them.

And thus every bleſſing beſtowed upon them will be ſo received, that it will be truly enjoyed here, and will prove a ſource of real and laſting happineſs: and the preſent good will neither be allayed by anxiety, nor ſucceeded

ceeded by wearineſs and diſguſt. While it remains, it will be enjoyed to the utmoſt; and when it is taken away, it will not be immoderately regretted, ſince that to which it owed its greateſt reliſh will ſtill remain, and prove a ſource of happineſs in the days of affliction and diſappointment, as well as in thoſe of proſperity and ſucceſs.

It is very certain that there are few, if any, either amongſt the afflicted, or amongſt the happy, who enjoy to the utmoſt all the bleſſings which are beſtowed upon them. Thoſe who take a view of their own ſituation in life, with a ſincere deſire to make the beſt of it, will probably find much more happineſs within their power, than in the moments of uneaſineſs and diſcontent they are apt to imagine. This obſervation is generally true, even of the greateſt ſufferers.

But

But let us ſuppoſe that this were not the caſe, for it muſt be allowed to be poſſible that all earthly comforts may be taken away:—A perſon who has long been ſtruggling againſt the ſevereſt afflictions of body and of mind, may have met with nothing but diſappointments; and in the midſt of all, he may not find a friend to aſſiſt and ſupport him, or to beſtow that tender ſoothing conſolation, which can almoſt convert afflictions into pleaſures; or, what is ſtill more painful, the friend from whom he expected this may change, and embitter thoſe ſufferings he ſhould alleviate; the endeavours to do good which benevolence inſpires, may prove unſucceſsful; in a word, all in this world may fail.

This is indeed a caſe rarely, if ever, to be met with; but as it muſt be allowed to be poſſible, let us take things in the worſt light

imaginable, and then conſider the happineſs which yet remains to balance theſe afflictions, in the heavenly comforts which religion offers.

The moſt unhappy may yet find a Friend to whom they may freely unboſom all their ſorrows with the fulleſt confidence, and reſt ſecure of finding that conſolation which is really beſt for them, ſince He is both able and willing to beſtow it:—this is a happineſs of which none but themſelves can ever deprive them. Though ſlighted and neglected, perhaps oppreſſed and injured by the world, yet are they certain that He regards their ſufferings, He hears their prayers, and will reward their patience.

When they conſider that all events are at his diſpoſal, and theſe ſufferings are permitted for their greater good, their ſubmiſſion, inſtead

ſtead of being full of terror and anxiety, will be an act of love and confidence;—even the wiſh that they could chooſe their own lot, will be ſuppreſſed; and they will rejoice in the thought that Infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs will do it for them.

When they remember, that all afflictions are trials, and that by bearing them as they ought, they may beſt expreſs their love and gratitude, and ſecure his favour and protection,—the activity of their minds will be again awakened, and their utmoſt efforts again exerted, with a pleaſure and ſatisfaction which can attend on no other purſuit, ſince all but this are liable to diſappointment. Here the intention, not the ſucceſs, will be conſidered; and the ſincere wiſh, when nothing more is in their power, will be accepted.

If we are engaged in the ſervice of a friend, every difficulty becomes a ſource of pleaſure; we exert ourſelves with delight in finding means to conquer it; we even enjoy any ſuffering which can procure his advantage, or expreſs our affection.

A ſatisfaction of the ſame kind may continually be enjoyed by the afflicted. It is true, their ſufferings can bring no advantage to their Creator; his happineſs can receive no addition from the feeble efforts of his creatures; yet ſtill, to a heart full of love and gratitude, there is a pleaſure in exerting every effort to expreſs thoſe ſentiments, in doing or ſuffering any thing which may conduce to that end. In this view, afflictions may be received with real ſatisfaction, ſince they afford continual opportunities of expreſſing our readineſs to conform to his will, even when

it

it is moſt contrary to our own; and this is the ſtrongeſt proof of love and confidence we are able to give; and therefore, to the heart which truly feels them, muſt be attended with a ſatisfaction ſuch as pleaſure cannot beſtow.

When we read the hiſtories of thoſe who have voluntarily undergone the moſt painful ſufferings, rather than tranſgreſs their duty, we admire their virtues, and eſteem them happy. Thoſe who receive as they ought the trials which are ſent them, do all in their power to follow their examples, and may, in a great degree, enjoy the ſame happineſs; their aims, their wiſhes, are the ſame; like them, they bleſs Him who permits the trial; they would deteſt the thought of eſcaping from it, by being guilty of the ſmalleſt crime; they rejoice in ſuffering for his ſake, and

depend, with entire confidence, on his aſſiſtance and ſupport.

If at any time the affliction ſeems too ſevere to be ſupported, and nature almoſt ſinks under the trial, let them anticipate the future time, and think with what ſentiments they ſhall look back upon it;—think, if they can, what joy it will afford them to reflect, that no ſufferings could ever ſhake their reſolution; that their love to their Almighty Father, and deſire to be conformable to his will, have been ſtill the ruling principles of their hearts, even in the midſt of the ſevereſt trials; that their afflictions have not made them neglect their duty to Him, or to their fellow-creatures; that their beſt endeavours have been ſtill exerted, and their entire confidence ever placed in Him.

Then

Then let them look farther ſtill, and think of the time when all earthly joys and ſorrows will be for ever paſſed away, and nothing of them will remain but the manner in which they have been received; let them think of the happineſs of thoſe who have been "made "perfect through ſufferings," and who will then look forward to an eternity of bliſs.

Will they then wiſh that they had ſuffered leſs? Or who would wiſh it now, if ſuch are the bleſſed fruits of ſufferings? And it depends on ourſelves to make them ſo: for the aſſiſtance of Him who alone can ſupport our weakneſs, will never be wanting to thoſe who ſeek it.

Such reflections, ſuch hopes, as theſe, can ſurely afford pleaſures more than ſufficient to overbalance any afflictions to which we may be

be liable in this world:—And *theſe* are pleaſures which the greateſt ſufferer may feel, and in which the moſt unhappy may rejoice.

To conclude;—Religion cannot prevent loſſes and diſappointments, pains and ſorrows; for to theſe, in this imperfect ſtate, we muſt be liable; nor does it require us to be inſenſible to them, for that would be impoſſible; but in the midſt of all, and even when all earthly pleaſures fail, it commands—it inſtructs—it enables us to be happy.

ON THE

CHARACTER of LÆTITIA.

IN the midſt of a cheerful and animated converſation, the attention of a large company was ſuddenly called off by the tolling of a neighbouring bell, and the appearance of a funeral paſſing by the windows. An enquiry was made whoſe it was? with that ſort of indolent curioſity which is ſometimes excited by things ſuppoſed to be no way intereſting, and which hardly attends to the anſwer;—but a gloom was ſpread over every countenance, when it was known to be the funeral of the young and beautiful LÆTITIA, who

who had lately been the ornament of every aſſembly in which ſhe appeared, the admiration of all beholders, and the delight of all who knew her intimately.

As ſeveral in the company had been acquainted with LÆTITIA, the converſation naturally turned upon her character. The thought of youth and beauty thus nipped in their bloom, impreſſes an awful, yet tender melancholy in the minds even of indifferent perſons, which diſpoſes them to ſerious thoughts, and makes them anxious to know particulars: and the accounts now given of her engaged the attention of all who were preſent.

LÆTITIA had juſt entered her eighteenth year, her perſon was uncommonly beautiful, animated by all the vivacity which is natural

to

to that age, and all the ſweetneſs of the moſt amiable character. Her youthful ſpirits had never been damped by ill health, nor checked by unkindneſs and ſeverity; her tender parents, far from reſtraining her pleaſures, had only endeavoured to ſecure them by innocence, improve them by virtue, and exalt them by religion.

The peace and joy of her heart diffuſed a charm on every object which ſurrounded her; and every employment in which ſhe was engaged, afforded her new pleaſures;—ſhe purſued her ſtudies, and enjoyed her amuſements, with the ſame ſpirit and alacrity;—every kindneſs ſhe received filled her heart with gratitude, and all ſhe could beſtow was felt by her with that innocent exultation which true benevolence inſpires, and in which vanity claims no part.

In

In the fulneſs of her heart ſhe might have related ſome inſtance of diſtreſs which ſhe had relieved, with the ſame ſentiments with which ſhe related any other circumſtance that afforded her the greateſt pleaſure; for it never entered her thoughts to admire herſelf for ſuch things, or talk of them as if ſhe was ſurpriſed at herſelf for doing them. They appeared to her ſo natural, that ſhe imagined every one would have done the like, and only thought herſelf more fortunate than others, when an opportunity preſented itſelf for indulging her inclination.

From the ſame principle proceeded her endeavours to pleaſe in ſociety. She wiſhed to make all as happy as ſhe could; ſhe wiſhed to deſerve and gain affection; but ſhe never thought of ſupplanting others, or endeavouring to aſſume a ſuperiority: and far from deſiring

deſiring to leſſen their merits, in order to raiſe herſelf by the compariſon, ſhe was eager to procure for all, the good which ſhe valued herſelf, and therefore diſpoſed to repreſent all in the moſt favourable light. Indeed, it coſt her no difficulty to do ſo, becauſe all appeared to her in that light. Happy in herſelf, and diſpoſed to be pleaſed, her attention was naturally turned to the moſt pleaſing circumſtances, in every event, and every character.

She often appeared delighted with things which others might have conſidered as trifles, and that not only in her amuſements, but in the characters of thoſe with whom ſhe converſed. Her imagination was diſpoſed to magnify every good and amiable quality, and every little inſtance of kindneſs and attention beſtowed upon herſelf; but her affections, though

though warm and lively, were far from being indiſcriminately laviſhed on all; her heart felt a kind word or look often much more ſtrongly than it deſerved, but its tendereſt attachments were reſerved for a choſen few; and her friendſhip, like her benevolence, was ardent, animated, and diſpoſed to run almoſt into exceſs.

The ſame diſpoſition appeared in other inſtances. She enjoyed amuſements as much as thoſe who think of nothing but purſuing them, and even found pleaſures where many would have thought they ſhewed ſuperior ſenſe by being tired; but from the midſt of the gayeſt aſſembly, where her vivacity inſpired pleaſure to all around her, ſhe would have flown at the call of benevolence, friendſhip, duty, or religion; and far from thinking ſhe made a ſacrifice by doing ſo, would have

enjoyed

enjoyed the opportunity of exchanging a pleaſure which only amuſed her fancy, for one which touched her heart.

In common converſation, her innocent ſprightlineſs, and artleſs ſweetneſs of manners, won the hearts of thoſe who might have been inclined to envy her uncommon excellencies. There was a gentle earneſtneſs in her ſolicitude to pleaſe, which animated every look and action, and was far different from the ſtudied diſplay of vanity, and the artificial inſinuations of flattery; it ſpoke her true and genuine ſentiments, kept her continually upon the watch for every opportunity of expreſſing her attention and regard for others, and added a charm, which can hardly be deſcribed, even to the moſt trifling inſtances of them.

The

The worſt tempers were ſoftened in her preſence, and the moſt gloomy diſpoſitions could hardly avoid ſharing in her pleaſures; yet the greateſt flow of ſpirits could never, even for a ſingle moment, make her lay aſide the gentleneſs and modeſty of her character. She even felt, in a great degree, that timidity which is natural to a delicate mind; but it ſerved only to render her converſation more engaging and intereſting; it was a diffidence of herſelf, not a fear of others.

In the midſt of the moſt playful ſallies of her lively fancy, and while ſhe was gaining the admiration of all, far from appearing to lay claim to it, her looks and manners ſeemed continually to ſolicit their indulgence, and ſhewed that ſhe thought ſhe ſtood in need of it; yet accuſtomed to encouragement from her infancy, and judging of the benevolence

of

of others by her own, ſhe was diſpoſed to feel a confidence in all, and to be very unguarded in her converſation; but the innocence of her heart afforded her a ſecurity which the greateſt caution cannot ſupply;—ſhe knew no diſguiſe, but ſhe had need of none.

She felt for the ſufferings of others with the tendereſt ſenſibility, but ſhe expreſſed it, not by boaſting of a ſentiment which has no merit except in its application, but by an eagerneſs to aſſiſt and relieve, which made her ready to attempt even impoſſibilities, and by thoſe gentle ſoothing attentions, from which even hopeleſs diſtreſs muſt receive ſome degree of pleaſure. Her diſpoſition to enjoy every pleaſure to the utmoſt, made even the leaſt ſucceſs in her endeavours of this kind appear to her a happineſs which could hardly be too dearly purchaſed.

Her early piety, far from allaying her pleaſures, had added to every enjoyment the pleaſing ſentiment of love and gratitude to Him by whom they were beſtowed, and the animating hope of brighter joys hereafter. She daily offered up the affections of her innocent heart to Him who made it, and implored his aſſiſtance and protection, with that delightful confidence which true religion can alone inſpire;—without this, her greateſt pleaſures would have wanted their higheſt reliſh, and their beſt ſecurity; with it ſhe could enjoy them without anxiety, and conſider them as the earneſt of future happineſs.

Such was LÆTITIA: when in the full bloom of youth and health, which ſeemed to promiſe many happy years, ſhe was ſeized with a ſudden illneſs, which in a few days brought her to the grave.

An

An account like this could not fail to excite in the mind of every hearer, reflections of the moſt ſerious kind. Such ſtrokes as theſe, when youth, beauty, and gaiety, are thus ſuddenly ſnatched away, are felt even by the moſt thoughtleſs characters. The young are warned to conſider the uncertainty of the advantages they poſſeſs, the vanity of every earthly pleaſure, and the tranſient nature of thoſe qualities which are at preſent the objects of general admiration; while thoſe who are farther advanced in life, are taught ſtill more powerfully the neceſſity of preparing for a change, from which even youth and health are no ſecurity.

The importance of the preſent moment is impreſſed on every mind, by the thought of the uncertainty of the next. All acknowledge the folly of ſetting our hearts on pleaſures

juſt ready to eſcape from us, and the neceſſity of providing ſuch comforts as may ſupport us in that awful hour which perhaps is now at hand, and ſuch hopes as death itſelf cannot take away.

Such are the reflections which naturally occur, when a ſudden ſtroke brings home the thought of death to every mind; eſpecially when it has fallen where there was leaſt reaſon to expect it, and when youth and beauty render the object peculiarly intereſting.

Such reflections afford an important and affecting leſſon, which all muſt feel for the time, and of which all ſhould endeavour to preſerve the impreſſion.

In ſuch a ſtate of mind, when we conſider religion as our ſupport and comfort in the hour

hour of death, and as affording us a happineſs which ſhall laſt beyond the grave, all muſt be ſenſible of its value, and wiſh to feel its force, and obey its precepts, that they may ſhare in thoſe bleſſings which that religion can beſtow.

But the thought of death, even when attended with the moſt ſtriking circumſtances, ſeldom makes a laſting impreſſion; and thoſe who are merely awed into religion by that conſideration, may be too apt to lay it aſide, when a variety of other objects ſucceed, and call off their attention; or may connect the thought of it with a gloomy idea, which diſturbs their purſuits and their enjoyments, and which therefore they are glad to drive away. They feel themſelves well and happy; they converſe with others who are ſo; new ſcenes ariſe, and preſent objects make a ſtrong

impreſſion; and in the hurry of buſineſs or of pleaſure, the funeral of LÆTITIA is quickly forgotten.

But it is not from her funeral alone that inſtruction may be derived.—The thought of her early and unexpected death muſt indeed impreſs an awe on every mind, and lead to many reflections of the higheſt importance to all; and which, by ſuch a ſtroke, are ſhewn in the ſtrongeſt and moſt affecting light: but thoſe excited by her life and character may alſo afford many uſeful leſſons, which, though leſs obvious and ſtriking, are yet well worthy of our attention.

The pleaſures of youth are often conſidered by thoſe who are farther advanced in life, with a mixture of pity and contempt, as being the effects of ignorance of the world, and of a kind

kind of enthuſiaſm, which embelliſhes every object, and feaſts on imaginary enjoyments. This opinion is certainly in ſome degree true; for none ever lived to maturity, without feeling and lamenting the diſappointment of their youthful hopes, and the loſs of that pleaſing illuſion which once led the mind from one enjoyment to another, and filled up the many tedious vacancies of real life; but the diſappointment of too ſanguine hopes is very apt to lead to a contrary extreme.

The pleaſures of youth are indeed greatly owing to the diſpoſitions of the youthful mind; and theſe, it muſt be owned, are often the effects of illuſions, which time and experience muſt diſpel; but they are far from being always ſo; and many of thoſe diſpoſitions on which the pleaſures of youth are founded, are ſuch as the wiſe would wiſh, and endeavour

endeavour to preſerve through every period of life.

That expectation of being pleaſed, which prevails ſo much in young perſons, is one great ſource of their enjoyments. All are felt beforehand, and their hopes are not eaſily given up; the conviction that they ſhall be pleaſed, makes a ſtrong impreſſion on the imagination, which often laſts long enough to make them really be ſo; when otherwiſe they would have found little reaſon for it. This illuſion cannot indeed be preſerved in its full force, but the ſame diſpoſition to be pleaſed may yet remain; and there is hardly any thing of ſo much importance to the happineſs of life.

We ſee people ſeek for ſorrows, as if they were ſomething very ſcarce and valuable, which

which it would be a misfortune to overlook. Would they but employ as much attention in ſeeking for the innocent pleaſures which every different ſituation might afford, and accuſtom themſelves to conſider every thing in the moſt favourable light, ſuch a ſtate of mind would in itſelf be pleaſing, and would lead to many pleaſures, which are too often loſt merely for want of attending to them.

That deſire to pleaſe which is ſo natural to youth, may indeed be diſcouraged by diſappointments, but if preſerved through life, will prove a ſource of pleaſures to ourſelves and others. It can make even trifles appear agreeable and engaging, and will in a great degree ſupply the want of every other talent, and render thoſe who poſſeſs it always acceptable in ſociety; often indeed much more ſo than thoſe who are far ſuperior to them in every other

other reſpect, but who neglect or deſpiſe thoſe little attentions which this diſpoſition will naturally inſpire. Theſe ſhould, however, always be diſtinguiſhed from artifice and flattery, which are the inſtruments of vanity, not the expreſſions of benevolence.

In youth, the affections of the heart are warm and lively; the pleaſures, and even the hopes which they afford, are purſued, and enjoyed, to the utmoſt; probably they may lead to ſorrows and diſappointments; but they know little of their own intereſts, who endeavour to avoid theſe, by checking that activity of the mind, which is neceſſary to its improvement, as well as its happineſs; or by ſuppreſſing ſentiments on which our enjoyments muſt depend, and which (rightly directed) may prove the means of happineſs here and hereafter.

The

The innocence of youth is another great ſource of its pleaſures; but this is a happineſs, which, like that of health, is generally eſtimated by its loſs.

It is not neceſſary to conſider the ſituation of a perſon who has been guilty of great crimes; all muſt be ſenſible that it is wretched; but many things, which, taken ſeparately, may appear trifles, are yet ſufficient to deſtroy that purity of heart without which every pleaſure muſt be attended with ſome allay. This indeed, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the words, is not to be found in this imperfect ſtate, even in youth itſelf; ſtill leſs can it be expected in thoſe who are farther advanced in life.

But innocence of intention, integrity of heart, and a ſincere endeavour to do right, are

are qualities which all may poſſeſs, and which afford a ſecurity and peace of mind, ſuch as they can never enjoy who are in any degree wanting in them; whoſe profeſſions differ from their ſentiments; and who indulge themſelves in thoſe little arts which vanity or ſelf-intereſt ſo often ſuggeſt, and which are ſo common in the general intercourſe of ſociety, that the particular inſtances of them are ſeldom made the objects of attention, or conſidered in the light of real faults.

The candour of mind, and unſuſpecting temper ſo natural to youth, are alſo productive of many pleaſures which painful experience muſt in ſome degree deſtroy. But how many, by the thought of this, are led into errors far more pernicious, and often not leſs diſtant from the truth; for ſuſpicion can deceive, as well as ſimplicity, and frequently

quently miſſes the mark as effectually, by going beyond it.

How greatly is the peace of ſociety diſturbed, by offences taken which never were intended, by groundleſs doubts and apprehenſions, and by the imputation of faults and bad intentions which never in reality exiſted.

To avoid all error is certainly deſirable, but the one extreme is liable to it, as well as the other; and that diſpoſition of mind, which in caſes that can admit a doubt inclines rather to the moſt favourable ſide, is certainly by far the happieſt for the poſſeſſor, to ſay nothing of the obligations which benevolence and charity lay upon us in this reſpect.

Such reflections as theſe may naturally ariſe from the conſideration of a Character like that of

of LÆTITIA. Her youth affords many uſeful leſſons to grey hairs, as well as to thoſe who like herſelf are juſt entering into life, and who perhaps, like her, may be allowed only a few ſhort years to prepare themſelves for eternity. Her death ſets in a ſtrong light the neceſſity of ſuch preparation;—her life ſhews at the ſame time the happineſs of it.

That Religion is neceſſary to our comfort in the time of affliction, and our ſupport in the hour of death, all who have any ſenſe of it are ready to allow; but if conſidered merely in that light, it is too apt to be neglected in the days of health and proſperity, or obeyed with a cold, and often reluctant ſubmiſſion, as a reſtraint with which it is neceſſary to comply, in order to obtain the happineſs of a future ſtate. Few conſider ſufficiently its importance to happineſs, even in this life, and the

the preſent pleaſures, as well as future hopes, which it may afford to thoſe in whom it is not merely a conviction of the underſtanding, but a real ſentiment of the heart.

Let us then repreſent to ourſelves the ſituation of thoſe on whom the great truths which Religion reveals have made a juſt impreſſion; who feel that love and gratitude which are due to Infinite Perfection and Infinite Goodneſs; and in whom theſe ſentiments are the leading principles and animating motives for every action.

To ſuch perſons, how delightful is the thought, that they are under the guidance and protection of an indulgent Father, who can and will order all things for their real good; that every bleſſing beſtowed in this life is not merely a preſent enjoyment, but an inſtance of

of his goodneſs, a call to that ever-pleaſing ſentiment—affectionate gratitude, and an earneſt of future happineſs! Such thoughts give a ſecurity to all pleaſures; they are no longer enjoyed with trembling anxiety, from a dread that the next moment may ſnatch them away; for the next moment depends on an Almighty Friend, with whom we can ſafely intruſt our deareſt intereſts.

It has been well obſerved, by an excellent writer, *Qu'il ny a point de ſentiment plus doux au cœur de l'homme que la confiance*; but if this be true even in our intercourſe with frail and imperfect beings, in whom we may be miſtaken; and who, though their intentions may be ſincerely good, are often unable to help us, and ignorant of what is beſt for us; how much greater enjoyment muſt it afford, when fixed where it can never be miſ-

taken

taken or diſappointed! How encouraging is the certainty, that He who ſees the deepeſt receſſes of the heart, will obſerve and accept the ſecret good intention which could not be brought to effect, and the ſincere endeavour which has been diſappointed, and perhaps miſinterpreted in this world.

To relieve diſtreſs, to do good to others and promote their happineſs, muſt give pleaſure to every one who is not loſt to all ſenſe of goodneſs; but how greatly is this pleaſure increaſed, if the object on whom it is exerciſed be endeared to us by particular affection, or has been recommended to us by one who is ſo, and to whom we can in this manner expreſs our affection! What ſpirit does this conſideration give to our endeavours, and what an exalted pleaſure attends their ſucceſs!

This pleaſure, in the higheſt degree, religion adds to every exertion of benevolence. It ſtrengthens the ties of natural philanthropy, by ſhewing us in all mankind the children of one Common Parent, the objects of the ſame Redeeming Love, and the candidates for the ſame Eternal Happineſs. In every ſcene of diſtreſs to which we can afford relief, it reminds us, that our beſt Friend has aſſured us, that whatever is done to one of the leaſt of theſe his brethren, will be conſidered as done unto himſelf: and this pleaſure depends not on ſucceſs; for the endeavour, and even the *wiſh*, will be accepted as a proof of love and gratitude.

From the ſame conſideration, Religion becomes the only ſure foundation of that good-humour which is the charm of ſocial life. Can beings, who hope in a few years, perhaps

in

in a few hours, to be united in eternal love and happineſs, be diſpoſed to be angry with each other about trifles, and find a ſatisfaction in ſaying or doing what may give pain?

Were theſe truths felt as well as acknowledged, they muſt not only put an end to all violent hatred and animoſity, but muſt alſo ſoften all thoſe little irregularities of temper, which ſo frequently prevent even good people from being as happy in each other as they ought to be.

At the ſame time when we are hurt by ſuch things in others, particularly in thoſe we truly love and value, (and from whom, therefore, a trifle can give pain) how pleaſing to look forward to the time when all theſe imperfections ſhall be ended, and we ſhall find nothing to allay the pleaſures of affection and eſteem;

which in this life can never be enjoyed in their utmoſt perfection, from the mixture of human frailty which is found in a greater or leſs degree even in truly worthy characters.

But when friendſhip riſes to its pureſt heights, and meets with as little of ſuch allay as is poſſible in this imperfect ſtate, ſtill how greatly are even the refined pleaſures which it affords improved and exalted by religion! How delightful is the tie which unites two worthy characters in the nobleſt purſuits, when each is ſtrengthened and animated by the other; and their pleaſures, far from being allayed by the continual dread of ſeparation, are heightened by the hope that they will be laſting as eternity.

When the mind is engaged in the purſuit of improvement, and pleaſed with any little advance

advance it can make; or when it delights itſelf with the conſideration of what is beautiful and amiable in the natural or moral ſyſtem; how greatly is the pleaſure increaſed by looking forward to a time, when every faculty ſhall be improved beyond what we can at preſent conceive, when we ſhall be qualified for the moſt exalted enjoyments, and all our contemplations employed on the moſt perfect objects!

But when we endeavour to enlarge on a ſubject like this, we muſt find all our expreſſions fall ſhort of what we wiſh to deſcribe.

Theſe are but a few inſtances of the advantages which may be derived from Religion, even in the happieſt ſtate,—a faint ſketch of its power to refine, exalt, and ſecure our pleaſures. Happy they to whom experience ſhall

give a more perfect idea of it! They will not be reduced, in the day of affliction, to ſeek for comforts with which they were before unacquainted, and pleaſures which they know not how to enjoy; for the beſt pleaſures of their happieſt days will remain, unallayed by any misfortune that can befal them; and the mind, long accuſtomed to dwell on them and enjoy them, will grow more attached to them, as other pleaſures fail, and be enabled to look forward to the ſtroke which ſhall ſnatch them all away, not only with calm reſignation, but with joyful hope.

Far be it ever from us to limit the mercies of the Almighty, or diſcourage any from having recourſe to them, even in their lateſt moments. Far be it alſo from us to judge of the future happineſs of any, by their preſent ſtate of mind. An old age of languor and dejection,

dejection, a death of terror and anxiety, may often be ſucceeded by an eternity of bliſs.

But let thoſe who now enjoy health and proſperity never forget, that they can have no reaſon to depend on finding Religion their comfort in the hour of death, if they do not find it their happineſs in life.

ON

POLITENESS.

L'HYPOCRISIE eſt un hommage que "le vice rend a la vertu," ſays LA ROCHEFOUCAULT, and in one ſenſe it certainly is ſo, for it is an acknowledgment of the ſuperior excellence of virtue; and one who viewed mankind with the eyes of LA ROCHEFOUCAULT, muſt conſider Hypocriſy as an advantage to all.

ROUSSEAU, quoting this paſſage, adds, "Oui "comme celui des aſſaſſins de Ceſar, qui ſe "proſter-

" proſternoient a ſes pieds pour l' egorger " plus ſurement; couvrir ſa mechanceté du " dangereux manteau de l' Hypocriſie, ce n'eſt " point honorer la Vertu, c'eſt l' outrager en " profanant ſes enſeignes." It is indeed the homage of an enemy; and of all the enemies of virtue, there is perhaps none whoſe attacks have been more pernicious; and that not only by throwing a diſguiſe over vice, but by ſetting up an artificial image in the place of real virtue, and confounding the idea of the one with the other, till every appearance is ſuſpected, and the exiſtence of that which is true and genuine is rendered doubtful, to thoſe whoſe hearts do not bear teſtimony to its certainty.

There is hardly any thing which (conſidered abſtractedly) appears ſo natural as Sincerity. Speech was given us to expreſs our thoughts

thoughts and feelings; and to uſe it to expreſs what we do not think and feel, is an evident perverſion of it. But alas! man, fallen from his native innocence, now *dares* not be ſincere; conſcious of guilt, he ſeeks diſguiſe; and conſcious of diſguiſe in himſelf, he is ready to ſuſpect it in others.

Thus inſincerity firſt made its way amongſt mankind, and by ſuch conſiderations it has ſince been cheriſhed and encouraged, though every heart in ſecret bears teſtimony againſt it; and even amongſt the greateſt hypocrites, few would venture openly to defend it in matters of importance: in theſe all are ready to declare againſt it, and ſincerity is a quality to which all lay claim; yet in the daily occurrences of common life, it ſeems to be laid aſide by a kind of tacit agreement: few make any ſcruple of deviating from it themſelves,

or

or ſeem to expect a conformity to it in others; but deceit is practiſed when it can anſwer any purpoſe, and even acknowledged on many occaſions, as if it were in itſelf a matter of the greateſt indifference.

It is much too common, in every inſtance, to judge of actions, not according to what they really are, but according to the impreſſion they make upon us. The man who would be ſhocked at the thought of being a butcher, will feel no remorſe at impaling a butterfly; and he who would ſcorn to tell a ſolemn lie, will make no ſcruple of profeſſing eſteem and regard which he does not feel, or of encouraging an unexperienced young woman in follies which in his heart he deſpiſes, and which he knows will render her ridiculous. Yet the merit of actions depends not on their apparent effects, nor are we ſufficiently acquainted

quainted with the conſequences which may attend them, to be qualified to judge how far they may extend.

When once we deviate from the ſtraight path, however ſmall the deviation may be, and however ſtrong the reaſons for it, we can never know how far we may be led aſtray, nor what may be conſequences of that deviation. Could theſe be known at once, the fault which was conſidered merely as a trifle, would often appear ſhocking, even to thoſe who paid leaſt attention to it, though in fact they can make no difference in its real nature.

If inſincerity be in itſelf a fault, it muſt be ſo independent of the conſequences which may follow from it; yet the moſt trifling conſideration ſeems often to be thought a ſufficient excuſe for it, and we even hear it pleaded for,

for, as neceſſary to the peace and pleaſure of ſociety. But to whom can it be neceſſary? Surely to none but thoſe who have ſomething criminal, or at leaſt ſomething diſagreeable, to conceal, and whoſe real characters will not bear the light. The good and amiable qualities want only to be ſeen as they are, in order to be pleaſing and uſeful; and if every heart were ſuch as it ought to be, the delight of ſociety would be to throw aſide all diſguiſe, let every one expreſs his genuine ſentiments, and appear to others ſuch as he really is.

But it is eaſier to poliſh the manners, than to reform the heart; to diſguiſe a fault, than to conquer it. He who can venture to appear as he is, muſt be what he ought to be; —a difficult and arduous taſk! which often requires the ſacrifice of many a darling inclination, and the exertion of many a painful effort:—

effort:—and if there can be any hope of attaining the ſame end by a ſhorter and eaſier method, it is not wonderful that numbers are glad to have recourſe to it.

This is, in fact, the principal cauſe of that inſincerity which prevails ſo much in the ordinary intercourſe of ſociety, though there are many others which contribute to it.

Pride makes men endeavour to ſeem better than they really are, by aſſuming an appearance of thoſe virtues which they want, and endeavouring to diſguiſe thoſe vices which they cheriſh.

Selfiſhneſs makes them wiſh to engroſs a larger ſhare of eſteem and regard than is beſtowed on others: this introduces flattery, which is, in fact, an endeavour to purchaſe eſteem,

eſteem, and even affection, with counterfeit coin. It is playing upon the weakneſſes of others for our own advantage, and running the hazard of encouraging them in folly, and even in vice; and thereby doing them a real and material injury, merely for the ſake of gaining to ourſelves the trifling ſatisfaction of unmerited approbation.

This, to a perſon of any delicacy, ſhould give more pain than pleaſure, from a conſciouſneſs of having indeed deſerved the contrary: for who, that is not loſt to every generous ſentiment, could bear to receive a tribute of gratitude and good-will, in return for profeſſions of eſteem which he never felt, and kindneſs which he never intended? He may indeed deſpiſe the folly and vanity of thoſe who can be pleaſed with ſuch profeſſions, and poſſibly they may often be deſerving of contempt;

tempt; but this is no alleviation of his fault, nor can even this excuſe be always pleaded.

An innocent heart may be pleaſed with the flattery, (without giving entire credit to it) when it is conſidered as an expreſſion of real kindneſs: conſcious that its own ſentiments are warm, lively, and apt to run into exceſs, it may naturally ſuppoſe the ſame of others; and thus the poiſon is received under a pleaſing diſguiſe, till by degrees it grows familiar, and may produce the moſt fatal effects.

True Politeneſs—like true Benevolence, the ſource from which it flows—aims at the real good of all mankind, and ſincerely endeavours to make all eaſy and happy, not only by conſiderable ſervices, but by all thoſe little attentions which can contribute to it. In this it differs eſſentially from that artificial politeneſs

which too often aſſumes its place, and which conſiſts in an endeavour, not to make others happy, but to ſerve the intereſts of our own vanity, by gaining their favour and good opinion, though at the expence of truth, goodneſs, and even of their happineſs, if the point in view can be obtained by deſtroying it.

Flattery is an eſſential part of this ſort of politeneſs, the means by which it generally ſucceeds: but true politeneſs ſtands in need of no ſuch aſſiſtance: it is the genuine expreſſion of the heart, it ſeeks no diſguiſe, and will never flatter. He who acts from this principle, will expreſs to all what he truly feels, —a real good-will, a ſincere concern for their happineſs, and an earneſt deſire to promote it. He will not expreſs admiration for a fool, nor eſteem for a bad man; but he will expreſs benevolence to all, becauſe he feels it; and he will

will endeavour to do them good, as far as may be in his power, becauſe he ſincerely wiſhes it.

Flattery is directly contrary to this; it ſeeks its own ends, without conſidering what may be the conſequence with regard to others. It is alſo eſſentially different from that regard which is paid to real merit; for that is a tribute which is certainly its due, and may be both paid and received with innocence and pleaſure: but the expreſſions of this will generally be ſuch as eſcape undeſignedly from the heart, and are far different from the ſtudied language of flattery.

Indeed flattery is not, in general, addreſſed to real and acknowledged merit. It has been obſerved by one who ſeems to have ſtudied it as a ſcience, that a profeſſed beauty muſt not be complimented upon her perſon, but her

underſtanding, becauſe there ſhe may be ſuppoſed to be more doubtful of her excellence; while one whoſe pretenſions to beauty are but ſmall, will be moſt flattered by compliments on her perſonal charms.

The ſame may be obſerved as to other qualities: for though moſt people would conſider flattery as an inſult, if addreſſed to ſuch qualities as they know they do not poſſeſs; yet in general they are beſt pleaſed with it where they feel any degree of doubt, or ſuſpect that others may do ſo.

When Cardinal RICHELIEU expreſſed more deſire to be admired as a poet and a critic, than as one of the greateſt politicians in the world, we cannot ſuppoſe it was becauſe he thought theſe talents of more conſequence in a prime miniſter; but he was certain of his excellence

excellence in one reſpect, and wanted not to be told what all the world muſt think of him; in the other he wiſhed to excel, and was not ſure of ſucceſs.

The ſame may probably be the reaſon of the partiality which ſome writers are ſaid to have expreſſed for their worſt performances. It ſeems ſcarce poſſible to ſuppoſe that MILTON really preferred his Paradiſe Regained to his Paradiſe Loſt; but if he had any doubts of its ſucceſs, it was very natural for him to feel more anxiety about it, and to endeavour to perſuade others, and even himſelf, of its ſuperior merit.

This is a weakneſs in human nature, of which flattery generally takes advantage, without conſidering, that by ſuch means it not only encourages vanity in thoſe to whom it is

addreſſed, but may alſo draw them in, to make themſelves appear ridiculous, by the affectation of qualities to which they have little or no pretenſions.

Nor does this artificial kind of flattery generally ſtop at ſuch qualities as are in themſelves indifferent; it is too often employed (and perhaps ſtill more ſucceſsfully) in diſguiſing and palliating faults, and thereby affording encouragement to thoſe whoſe inclinations were reſtrained by ſome degree of remorſe.

It is unjuſt, as well as ill-natured, to take advantage of the weakneſſes of others, in order to obtain our own ends, at the hazard of rendering them ridiculous; but it is ſomething far worſe to lend a helping hand to thoſe who heſitate at engaging in the paths of

of vice, and feel a painful conflict between their duty and their inclination; or to endeavour to leſſen the ſenſe of duty in thoſe who are not free from ſome degree of remorſe, and deſire to amend. Yet theſe are, in general, the perſons to whom flattery is moſt acceptable:—it ſoothes their inclinations, and diſpels their doubts, at the ſame time that it gratifies their vanity; it frees them from a painful ſenſation, and ſaves them the trouble of a difficult taſk, while it affords them a preſent pleaſure; and if it does not entirely conquer their ſcruples, at leaſt it removes one reſtraint which lay in their way, the fear of being cenſured. Yet how often is all this done by thoſe who would think themſelves inſufferably injured, if they were to be ſuppoſed capable of picking a pocket, though in that caſe the injury might perhaps be trifling, and hardly worth a thought.

If

If "he who filches from me my good "name," has made me "poor indeed;" what ſhall we ſay of him, who from ſelfiſh views, perhaps merely for the ſake of obtaining a trifling gratification of his vanity, has done what may lead me to *deſerve* to forfeit that good name, even in the ſmalleſt inſtance? And if he has done this by deceit, and has found means to gain affection or eſteem in return for it, what other act of diſhoneſty can exceed the baſeneſs of ſuch proceeding? But theſe things are too apt to make little impreſſion when practiſed in what are called trifles, though that circumſtance makes no change in their real nature, and none can ſay how far the conſequences even of trifles may extend.

Thoſe who make no ſcruple of ſuch methods as theſe, if at the ſame time, by being much accuſtomed to polite company, they have

have acquired a certain elegance of manners, and facility of expreſſing themſelves, will ſeldom fail to pleaſe, upon a ſlight acquaintance; but the beſt actor will find it difficult always to keep up to his part.

He who is polite only by rule, will probably, on ſome occaſion or other, be thrown off his guard; and he who is continually profeſſing ſentiments which he does not feel, will hardly be able always to do it in ſuch a manner as to avoid betraying himſelf.

Whatever degree of affection or eſteem is gained without being deſerved, though at firſt it may be both paid and received with pleaſure, will probably, after a time, vaniſh into nothing, or prove a ſource of diſappointment and mortification to both parties: and even while the deluſion laſts, it is ſcarce poſſible

it

it ſhould be attended with entire ſatisfaction to the deceiver; for deceit of all kinds, from the greateſt to the moſt trifling inſtance of it, muſt be attended with a degree of anxiety, and can never enjoy that perfect eaſe and ſecurity, which attends on thoſe whoſe words and actions are the natural undiſguiſed expreſſions of the ſentiments of the heart.

But as mankind are apt to run from one extreme to another, we ſometimes ſee, that from a diſlike to this artificial politeneſs, which is continually gloſſing over faults, both in thoſe who practiſe it, and thoſe they practiſe it upon, a roughneſs and even brutality of manners is adopted, and dignified with the title of ſincerity.

Some perſons pique themſelves upon ſaying all they think, and are continually profeſſing

to

to do ſo; and as a proof of this, they will ſay things the moſt ſhocking to others, and give them pain without the leaſt remorſe, for fear of being ſuſpected of flattering them. But is this then the language of their heart? Alas! if it be ſo, let them ſet about reforming it, and make it fit to be ſeen, before they make their boaſt of expoſing it to public view: yet perhaps there may be as much affectation in this conduct as in the contrary extreme.

Pride may think to gain its own ends by an appearance of ſingularity, and by ſetting itſelf above the approbation of others, as vanity does by condeſcending to the meaneſt methods, in order to obtain it.

That ſincerity which is diſplayed with oſtentation, is generally to be ſuſpected. The conduct

conduct which an honeſt heart inſpires flows naturally from it; and thoſe who ſay rough things, in order to convince others of their ſincerity, give ſome reaſon to doubt of their being perfectly convinced of it themſelves.

Both theſe extremes are not only pernicious to the preſent peace and pleaſure of ſociety, but may alſo lead to very fatal conſequences.

The flatterer encourages vice and folly, undermines the principles of virtue, and gains, by fraud and artifice, a degree of eſteem and regard to which he has no title. The other does what he can to frighten every one from what is right; for if ſincerity diſcover ſuch a heart, diſguiſe muſt appear deſirable; and few conſider ſufficiently how much the cauſe of virtue muſt ſuffer, whenever a good quality is made to appear in an unamiable light.

Sincerity

Sincerity is indeed the ground-work of all that is good and valuable; however beautiful in appearance the ſtructure may be, if it ſtand not on this foundation, it cannot laſt. But ſincerity can hardly be called a virtue in itſelf, though a deviation from it is a fault:—A man may be ſincere in his vices, as well as in his virtues; and he who throws off all reſtraint of remorſe or ſhame, and even makes a boaſt of his vices, can claim no merit from the ſincerity he expreſſes in ſo doing.

If he who is *ſincere* cannot appear *amiable*, his heart is wrong, and his ſincerity, far from being a virtue, ſerves only to add to the reſt of his faults that of being willing to give pain to others, and able to throw aſide that ſhame which ſhould attend on every fault, whether great or ſmall, and which is ſometimes a reſtraint

reſtraint to ſuch as are incapable of being influenced by nobler motives.

Roughneſs of manners is in fact ſo far from being in itſelf a mark of ſincerity, that it is merely the natural expreſſion of *one* character, as gentleneſs is of *another*; and it ſhould always be remembered, that to connect the idea of a good quality with a diſagreeable appearance, is doing it a real injury, and leads to much more pernicious conſequences than may at firſt be apprehended. Yet this is too often done, in many inſtances, not only by thoſe who are intereſted to promote ſuch a deception, but alſo by thoſe who take up maxims upon credit, and believe what others have believed, without enquiring into the grounds of ſuch opinions: and this is too much the caſe with the world in general.

Much

Much has been ſaid and written on the ſubject of Politeneſs; but thoſe who attempt to teach it, generally begin where they ſhould end; and the inſtruction they give is ſomething like teaching a ſet of elegant phraſes in a language not underſtood, or inſtructing a perſon in muſic, by making him learn a few tunes by memory, without any knowledge of the grounds of the ſcience. The poliſh of elegant manners is indeed truly pleaſing, and neceſſary in order to make the worthieſt character compleatly amiable; but it ſhould be a *poliſh*, and not a *varniſh*; the ornament of a good heart, not the diſguiſe of a bad one.

Where a truly benevolent heart is joined with a delicate mind, and both are directed by a ſolid and refined underſtanding, the natural expreſſion of theſe qualities will be the eſſential part of true politeneſs. All the reſt

is

is mere arbitrary cuſtom, which varies according to the manners of different nations, and different times. A conformity to this is, however, highly neceſſary; and thoſe who neglect to acquire the knowledge and practice of it, betray the want of ſome of the above-mentioned qualities.

A perſon might as well refuſe to ſpeak the language of a country, as to comply with its cuſtoms in matters of indifference; like it, they are ſigns which, though unmeaning perhaps in themſelves, are eſtabliſhed by general conſent to expreſs certain ſentiments; and a want of attention to them would appear to expreſs a want of thoſe ſentiments, and therefore, in regard to others, would have the ſame bad effect. But though the neglect of theſe things be blameable, thoſe who conſider them as the eſſential part of true politeneſs

liteneſs are much wider of the mark, for they may be ſtrictly obſerved where that is entirely wanting.

To wound the heart, to miſlead the underſtanding, to diſcourage a timid character, to expoſe an ignorant, though perhaps an innocent one, with numberleſs other inſtances in which a real injury is done, are things by no means inconſiſtent with the *rules* of politeneſs, and are often done by ſuch as would not go out of the room before the perſon they have been treating in this manner; for though doing ſuch things openly might be conſidered as ill-manners, there are many indirect ways which are juſt as effectual, and which may be practiſed without any breach of eſtabliſhed forms. Like the Phariſees of old, they are ſcrupulous obſervers of the letter of the law in trifles, while they neglect

the ſpirit of it; and their obſervance of forms, far from giving any reaſon to depend on them, on the contrary often ſerves them only as a ſhelter, under which they can do ſuch things as others would not dare to venture upon.

This is alſo, in general, only put on (like their beſt dreſs) when they are to go into company; for whenever politeneſs is not the natural expreſſion of the heart, it muſt be in ſome degree a reſtraint, and will therefore probably be laid aſide in every unguarded hour, that is to ſay, in all their intercourſe with thoſe whom it is of moſt conſequence to them to endeavour to make happy:—And the unhappineſs which ſometimes reigns in families, who really poſſeſs many good qualities, and are not wanting in mutual affection, is often entirely owing to a want of that true

and

and *ſincere* politeneſs which ſhould animate the whole conduct, though the manner of expreſſing it muſt be different according to different circumſtances.

Politeneſs is always neceſſary to compleat the happineſs of ſociety in every ſituation, from the accidental meeting of ſtrangers, to the moſt intimate connections of families and friends; but it muſt be the genuine expreſſion of the ſettled character, or it cannot be conſtant and univerſal.

Let us then endeavour to conſider the true foundation of that ever-pleaſing quality diſtinguiſhed by the name of Politeneſs, leaving the ornamental part of it, like other ornaments, to be determined by the faſhion of the place and time.

To enter fully into the detail of ſuch a character, would be an arduous taſk indeed; but the ſlighteſt ſketch of what is truly pleaſing, cannot fail to afford ſome ſatisfaction; and there can hardly be a more uſeful exerciſe to the mind, than to dwell on the conſideration of good and amiable qualities, to endeavour to improve upon every hint, and raiſe our ideas of excellence as high as poſſible. We may then apply them to our own conduct in the ordinary occurrences of life; we may obſerve in what inſtances we fall ſhort of that perfection we wiſh to attain, endeavour to trace the cauſe of the want of it in thoſe inſtances, and learn not to diſguiſe our faults, but to amend them.

True benevolence inſpires a ſincere deſire to promote the happineſs of others. True delicacy enables us to enter into their feelings;

ings; it has a quick ſenſe of what may give pleaſure or pain, and teaches us to purſue the one, and avoid the other; and a refined underſtanding points out the ſureſt means of doing this in different circumſtances, and of ſuiting our conduct to the perſons with whom we are concerned. The union of all theſe will conſtitute that amiable character, of which true politeneſs is the genuine and natural expreſſion.

The perſon who has not theſe qualities may indeed, by other means, attain to ſomething like politeneſs on ſome occaſions; but the perſon who poſſeſſes them in perfection, can never be wanting in it, even for a moment, in any inſtance, or in any company;—with ſuperiors and inferiors, with ſtrangers and with friends, the ſame character is ſtill preſerved, though expreſſed in different

ways. Thoſe pleaſing attentions, which are the charm of ſociety, are continually paid with eaſe and ſatisfaction, for they are the natural language of ſuch ſentiments; and to ſuch a character it would be painful to omit them; while every thing that can give unneceſſary pain, even in the ſmalleſt degree, is conſtantly avoided, becauſe directly contrary to it; for no pain can be inflicted by a perſon of ſuch a diſpoſition, without being ſtrongly felt at the ſame time.

A ſuperior degree of delicacy may often be the cauſe of much pain to thoſe who poſſeſs it; they will be hurt at many things which would make no impreſſion upon others; but from that very circumſtance, they will be taught to avoid giving pain on numberleſs occaſions, when others might do it. Whenever an exceſs of ſenſibility is ſuppoſed to produce

produce a contrary effect, we may be certain it is, in fact, an excefs of felfifhnefs.

True delicacy feels the pain it receives, but it feels much more ftrongly the pain it gives; and therefore will never give any, which it is poffible to avoid. Far from being the caufe of unreafonable complaints, uneafinefs, and fretfulnefs, it will always carefully avoid fuch things; it will know how to make allowances for others, and rather fuffer in filence, than give them unneceffary pain. It will infpire the gentleft and moft engaging methods of helping others to amend their faults, and to correct thofe irregularities of temper which difturb the peace of fociety, without expofing them to the humiliation of being upbraided, or even of being made fully fenfible of the offence they give; which often difpofes people rather to feek for excufes, than

than to endeavour to amend. In ſhort, it enlightens and directs benevolence; diſcovers numberleſs occaſions for the exertion of it, which are too generally overlooked; and points out the ſureſt and moſt pleaſing means of attaining thoſe ends which it purſues.

This earneſt deſire to promote the happineſs of all, which is eſſential to true politeneſs, ſhould always be carefully diſtinguiſhed from that deſire of pleaſing, in which ſelf-love is in fact the object; for though this may ſometimes appear to produce the ſame effects with the other, it is by no means ſufficient fully to ſupply its place. It is indeed a natural ſentiment, which is both pleaſing and uſeful when kept within due bounds.

To gain the good-will of others, is ſoothing to the heart; and they muſt be proud or inſenſible,

ſenſible, in a very uncommon degree, who are not deſirous of it: but much more than this is neceſſary to inſpire true and conſtant politeneſs in every inſtance; and this deſire carried to exceſs, may produce very pernicious conſequences.

From hence ſometimes proceed endeavours to ſupplant others in the favour of thoſe we wiſh to pleaſe, and to recommend ourſelves at their expence, together with all the train of evils which attend on envy and jealouſy.

From hence alſo flattery, and all thoſe means of gaining favour, by which the real good of others is ſacrificed to our own intereſt; and from hence much of the inſincerity which prevails in common converſation. Falſe maxims are adopted, and the real ſentiments diſguiſed; a diſpoſition to ridicule,

ridicule, cenſoriouſneſs, and many other faults, are encouraged; and truth and goodneſs are ſacrificed to the fear of giving offence: and thus an inclination in itſelf innocent, and calculated to promote the pleaſure and advantage of ſociety, is made productive of much evil, by being ſuffered to act beyond its proper ſphere, and to take place of others which ſhould always be preferred before it.

But even conſidered in the moſt favourable light, the deſire of pleaſing others falls far ſhort of that endeavour to make them happy which benevolence inſpires: for the one is only exerted in ſuch inſtances as can gain obſervation; the other extends to every thing within its power, and can ſacrifice even the deſire of pleaſing, to that of doing real good, whenever the one is inconſiſtent with the other.

other. Yet where this is done with that true politeneſs which is the effect of thoſe qualities already mentioned, it is very likely to ſucceed better in the end, even as to gaining favour with all thoſe whoſe favour is truly valuable: but it depends not on ſuch circumſtances; it is a ſettled character, which is naturally diſplayed in every inſtance, without art or ſtudy.

It may alſo be obſerved, that though a great degree of affection may ſubſiſt where this quality is wanting, yet that want will always prove an allay to the pleaſure of it.

We ſee perſons who really feel this affection, who would do and ſuffer a great deal to ſerve each other, and would conſider a ſeparation by abſence or death as one of the greateſt of evils; and who yet, merely from the want of this quality, loſe a thouſand

opportunities

opportunities of promoting the happineſs of thoſe they truly love and value, and often give them real pain, without ever ſuſpecting themſelves of being wanting in regard and affection, becauſe they feel that they would be ready to exert themſelves in doing them any eſſential ſervice.

Thus the pleaſure of ſociety is deſtroyed, and the ſuppoſed conſciouſneſs of poſſeſſing good qualities (for the exertion of which it is poſſible no opportunity may ever offer) is thought to make amends for the want of ſuch as are truly pleaſing and uſeful in every day and hour of our intercourſe with each other.

Happineſs conſiſts not in ſome extraordinary inſtance of good fortune, nor virtue in ſome illuſtrious exertion of it; for ſuch things are in the power of few: but if they

are

are true and genuine, the one muſt be practiſed, and the other enjoyed, in the conſtant and uniform tenor of our lives.

The perſon who on ſome extraordinary occaſion does another ſome ſignal piece of ſervice, is by no means ſo great a benefactor, as one who makes his life eaſy and happy by thoſe pleaſing attentions, the ſingle inſtances of which too often paſs unnoticed, but which altogether form the delight of ſocial intercourſe, and afford a calm and ſerene pleaſure, without which, the moſt proſperous fortune can never beſtow happineſs.

There is a ſecurity in all our intercourſe with perſons of this character, which baniſhes that continual anxiety, and dread of giving offence, which ſo often throw a reſtraint on the freedom of converſation.

Such

Such perſons wiſh all mankind to be amiable and happy, and therefore would certainly do their utmoſt to make them ſo; and far from taking offence where none was intended, they will be diſpoſed to ſee all in the moſt favourable light; and even where they cannot approve, they will never be ſevere in their cenſures on any, but always ready to endeavour to bring them back to what it right, with that gentleneſs and delicacy, which ſhew it is for their ſakes they wiſh it, and not in reſentment of an injury received, or with a view to aſſume to themſelves a ſuperiority over them.

They will make allowances for all the little peculiarities of humour, all the weakneſſes, and even the faults, as far as poſſible, of thoſe with whom they converſe, and carefully avoid whatever may tend to irritate and aggravate

aggravate them; which is often done by ſuch things as would be trifling and indifferent in other circumſtances. This not only has a bad effect, by giving preſent uneaſineſs, but ſerves to ſtrengthen a bad habit; for every fault (particularly a fault of the temper) is increaſed by exerciſe; and trifles, which might have been immediately forgotten, are kept up by being taken notice of, till they become real evils.

They will alſo carefully avoid expoſing peculiarities and weakneſſes, and never engage in the cruel ſport of what is called "playing off a character," by leading others to betray their own follies, and make themſelves ridiculous without ſuſpecting it. Such an amuſement is by no means inconſiſtent with artificial politeneſs, becauſe the perſon who ſuffers by it is not ſenſible of the injury; but

but it is directly contrary to that politeneſs which is true and ſincere, becauſe none of the qualities on which it is founded could ever inſpire ſuch conduct, or find any gratification in it. On the contrary, they would give a feeling of the injury, of which the perſon who ſuffers it is inſenſible.

There is indeed ſomething particularly ungenerous in this conduct; it is like a robbery committed in breach of truſt; and not only the benevolent, but the honeſt heart muſt be ſhocked at it. To ſay it is deſerved, is no excuſe: a puniſhment may often be deſerved, but it can never be a pleaſure to a benevolent heart to inflict it.

But it is impoſſible to enter into a particular detail of the conduct which this *ſincere* politeneſs would inſpire on every occaſion. Its motive

motive remaining always the ſame, the manner of expreſſing it will readily be varied as different circumſtances may require; it will obſerve forms, where a neglect of them would give offence; it will be gentle, mild, and unaffected, at all times; compaſſionate, and tenderly attentive to the afflicted; indulgent to the weak, and ready not only to bear with them without impatience, but to give them all poſſible aſſiſtance. Ever diſpoſed to make the beſt of all, eaſy, cheerful, and even playful in familiar intercourſe, and on ſuitable occaſions; ſince, far from being a reſtraint upon the freedom of ſociety, it is indeed the only way of throwing aſide all reſtraint, without introducing any bad conſequences by doing ſo.

It needs no artifice and diſguiſe; it purſues no ſiniſter aims, no ſelfiſh views; but ſeeks the

real good of all, endeavours to expreſs what it feels, and to appear ſuch as it truly is.

How pleaſing were general ſociety, if ſuch a diſpoſition prevailed! How delightful all family intercourſe, if it were never laid aſide! Even friendſhip itſelf cannot be completely happy without it:—even real affection will not always ſupply its place. It is an univerſal charm, which embelliſhes every pleaſure in ſocial life, prevents numberleſs uneaſineſſes and diſguſts which ſo often diſturb its peace, and ſoftens thoſe which it cannot entirely prevent. It adds luſtre to every good and valuable quality, and in ſome degree will atone for many faults, and prevent their bad effects.

But it may be aſked, how is this quality to be attained? And it muſt indeed be owned,

owned, that to poſſeſs it in its utmoſt perfection, requires a very ſuperior degree both of delicacy and good ſenſe, with which all are not endued. But this ſhould never diſcourage any from the endeavour; for all may improve their talents, if they will exert them, and by aiming at perfection, may make continual advances towards it. Every good quality is beſt underſtood by endeavouring to practiſe it.

Let us conſider what conduct the ſentiments deſcribed would dictate on every different occaſion; let us endeavour to form to ourſelves the beſt notion of it we are able, and then watch for opportunities to put it in practice.

Such an attention will diſcover many which were overlooked before; it will ſhew

us where we have been wanting, and to what cauſe it hath been owing; and point out to us thoſe qualities in which we are deficient, and which we ought to endeavour to cultivate with the greateſt care. Our ſphere of action will be enlarged, and many things, too generally conſidered as matters of indifference, will become objects of attention, and afford means of improving ourſelves, and benefiting others. Nothing will be neglected as trifling, if it can do this even in the ſmalleſt degree, ſince in that view even trifles become valuable. Our ideas of excellence will be raiſed by continually aiming at it, and the heart improved by the thoughts of being thus employed.

Above all, let us ſubdue thoſe paſſions which ſo often oppoſe what reaſon approves, and what would afford the trueſt pleaſures

to

to the heart; and let us fix all that is good and amiable on the only ſure and immoveable foundation—the precepts of that Religion which alone can teach us conſtant, univerſal, and diſintereſted benevolence.

ON THE

CHARACTER of CURIO.

"'TIS his way," ſaid ALCANDER, as CURIO went out of the room: "indeed, my "friend, you muſt not mind it, he is an ho- "neſt fellow as ever lived."

'It may be ſo,' replied HILARIO, 'but 'really his honeſty is nothing to me; and had 'he picked my pocket, and converſed with 'good-humour, I ſhould have ſpent a much 'more agreeable evening. He has done no- 'thing but vent his ſpleen againſt the world, 'and

'and contradict every thing that was said;
'and you would have me bear with all this,
'because he does not deserve to be hanged!'

"Indeed," said ALCANDER, "you do not
"know him; with all his roughness, he has a
"worthy, benevolent heart;—his family and
"friends must bear with the little peculiari-
"ties of his temper, for in essential things he
"is always ready to do them service, and I
"will venture to say, he would bestow his
"last shilling to assist them in distress. I
"remember, a few weeks ago, I met him on
"the road in a violent rage with his servant,
"because he had neglected some trifle he
"expected him to have done; nothing he
"did could please him afterwards, and the
"poor fellow's patience was almost exhausted,
"so that he was very near giving him warn-
"ing. Soon after, the servant's horse threw
him,

" him, and he was very dangerouſly hurt. " CURIO immediately ran to him, carried " him home in his arms, ſent for the beſt " aſſiſtance, and attended him conſtantly " himſelf, to ſee that he wanted for nothing; " he paid the whole expence; and as he has " never recovered ſo far as to be able to do " his work as he did before, CURIO has taken " care to ſpare him upon every occaſion, and " has increaſed his wages, that he may be able " to afford the little indulgencies he wants."

' How lucky it was,' replied HILARIO, ' that ' the poor fellow happened to meet with this ' terrible accident, for otherwiſe he would ' never have known that he had a good ' maſter, but might have gone to his grave ' with the opinion that he was an ill-natured ' churl, who cared for nobody but himſelf. ' The other day I met one of his nephews,

' who

'who had juſt been at dinner with him; 'the young fellow was come to town from 'Cambridge for a few days, and had been to 'viſit his uncle, but happening unfortunately 'to be dreſſed for an aſſembly, the old gentle-'man was diſpleaſed with his appearance, 'and began railing at the vices and follies of 'the age, as if his nephew had been deeply 'engaged in them, though I believe no one 'is leſs inclined to them; but every thing he 'did or ſaid, was wrong through the whole 'day, and, as he has really a reſpect for his 'uncle, he came away quite dejected and 'mortified at his treatment of him.'

"And a few days after," replied ALCANDER, 'when that nephew called to take leave of "him, he ſlipt a bank-note of one hundred "pounds into his hands at parting, to pay "the expences of his journey, and ran out

"of

" of the room to avoid receiving his thanks " for it."

' So then,' returned HILARIO, ' if the ' young man is of a ſordid diſpoſition, and ' thinks money a better thing than friend- ' ſhip, good-humour, and all the amiable ' qualities which render life agreeable, he has ' reaſon to be perfectly ſatisfied with his ' uncle; if he is not, the old gentleman has ' done his part to make him ſo, by ſhewing ' him, that, according to his notions, kind- ' neſs conſiſts in giving money. For my ' part, if ever I ſhould be a beggar, or ' break my bones, I may perhaps be glad to ' meet with your friend again; but as I hope ' neither of thoſe things are ever likely to ' happen to me, I am by no means ambi- ' tious of the honour of his acquaintance:— ' his good qualities are nothing to me, and

' his

"his bad ones are a plague to all who come "in his way."

"One may bear with them," replied ALCANDER, "where there is ſo much real worth; "the whole world could not bribe that man "to do a baſe action."

"So much the better for him," returned HILARIO; "but really, as I ſaid before, it "is nothing to me; and after all, whatever "excuſes your good-nature may find for "him, there muſt be ſomething wrong in "the heart, where the manners are ſo un-"pleaſant."

"He has not a good temper," ſaid ALCANDER, "and every man has not the ſame "command over himſelf; but indeed he "has a good heart; and if you knew him as

"well

" well as I do, you muſt love him with all " his oddities."

' His oddities are quite enough for me,' returned HILARIO, ' and I deſire to know ' no more of him; he might make me *eſteem* ' him, but he could never make me *love* him; ' and it is very unpleaſant to feel one of theſe, ' where one cannot feel the other.'

ALCANDER could not but be ſenſible of the truth of many of HILARIO's obſervations;— he ſighed in ſecret for the friend whoſe good qualities he valued, and whoſe foibles gave him pain; and could CURIO have known what his friend felt for him at that moment, it might perhaps have gone farther than all he ever read or thought upon the ſubject, towards correcting a fault for which he often blamed himſelf, but which he ſtill continued

to

to indulge, and to imagine himſelf unable to ſubdue.

Perhaps neither of the parties concerned in this diſpute were well qualified to judge as to the ſubject of it. Eſteem and regard influenced the one, and added ſtrength to his good-nature; while the other, whoſe patience was wearied out by the ill-humours of a ſtranger, of whoſe merits he was ignorant, was naturally diſpoſed to view them in an unfavourable light. But ſuch a converſation muſt induce every indifferent perſon to reflect on the importance of a quality which could oblige a friend to bluſh for the perſon he eſteemed, and make an enemy at firſt ſight of one by no means wanting in good-nature, who came into company with a diſpoſition to pleaſe and to be pleaſed, and whoſe diſguſt was occaſioned by a diſappointment in that aim.

Can

Can ſuch a quality be a matter of little conſequence, which thoſe who are punctual in their duty in more eſſential points may be permitted to neglect? Can it be a diſpoſition ſo ſtrongly implanted in the heart of any man, that his utmoſt efforts cannot conquer it?—The firſt ſuppoſition might furniſh an excuſe for giving way to any fault, ſince all may fancy they have virtues to counterbalance it. The laſt would reduce us almoſt to mere machines, and diſcourage every effort to reform and improve the heart, without which, no real and ſolid virtue can be attained.

ON

FORTITUDE.

TRUE Fortitude is a ſtrength of mind, which cannot be overcome by any trials or any ſufferings. It conſiſts not in being inſenſible of them, for there is no real fortitude in bearing what we do not feel; but it renders us ſuperior to them, and enables us to act as we ought to do in every different ſituation in life, in every change that can affect our outward circumſtances, or our inward feelings.

There is a kind of fortitude which proceeds from natural conſtitution: ſome are

leſs affected by trials than others; and ſome, from ſtrong health and ſpirits, are able to go through a great deal without ſinking under it. But this can only extend to a certain degree. Afflictions may come to ſuch a height, that the moſt inſenſible muſt feel them; and then their apparent fortitude is overcome, and the ſtrongeſt health and ſpirits can only reſiſt a little longer than the weakeſt,—they muſt give way to a ſufficient force, and therefore can never be the ſource of true and conſtant fortitude.

There is alſo a kind of fortitude which is called forth to action on particular occaſions, and for a time appears ſuperior to the trial; and this may ſometimes be inſpired even by motives which are in themſelves highly blameable. A point in view, which is eagerly purſued, will enable a perſon to go through

through what at other times might appear inſupportable; but this can only laſt while the motive remains in force; and thoſe who by this have been rendered equal to what appear to be the greateſt trials, have often at other times ſunk under the ſmalleſt. True fortitude muſt ſpring from ſome principle which is conſtant and unchangeable, and can ſupport it at all times, and againſt every attack.

It cannot therefore be derived from any thing in this world. Natural ſtrength muſt yield to pain and ſorrow;—earthly conſiderations can ſupport us no farther than their immediate influence extends;—pride cannot enable us to bear humiliations, or even thoſe little mortifications which daily occur, when there is no credit to be gained by doing ſo;—and philoſophy muſt at laſt be reduced to nothing more than ſuppreſſing complaints,

and making the beſt of what it cannot cure. Theſe may inſpire a ſtrength which will laſt for a time—a ſtrength which may ſerve for certain occaſions, but will fail on others,—or an appearance of ſtrength to conceal our weakneſs. But none of theſe can inſpire that fortitude which is a conſtant invariable diſpoſition of mind, prepared for every trial, and ſuperior to them all. This can only be derived from a confidence in that aſſiſtance which can never fail; from a motive for action which is ſufficient to carry us through every trial; and from hopes which nothing in this world can take away.

The effect of this fortitude is, that it makes us ſteadily and conſtantly purſue the great aim we have in view; it is drawn aſide by no pleaſure; it ſhrinks at no difficulty; it ſinks under no affliction; but reſolutely goes on, whatever

whatever may be the path aſſigned, and though it may ſuffer, it never yields.

This virtue is exerciſed, not only in the greateſt afflictions, but in the daily occurrences of life; and if in theſe its trials are not ſo painful, yet they may perhaps often be more difficult. It enables us to bear the faults and weakneſſes of others, the diſappointments and humiliations which all muſt meet with, and the numberleſs little vexations and inconveniencies, which though when conſidered ſeparately they may appear trifling, yet often affect the temper much more than we are generally aware of.

It is alſo exerciſed by our own weakneſſes and imperfections; for there is no perſon living who can always preſerve the ſame equal ſtate of mind and ſpirits: and it is no

inconſiderable part of true fortitude, to avoid giving way to what none can avoid feeling; and to perſevere in acting as we ought in every different diſpoſition of mind.

This then is the great and diſtinguiſhing character of true fortitude;—That it is conſtant and invariable, the ſame at all times, in all trials, and in all diſpoſitions; it depends not on the circumſtances in which we may be placed, nor on the ſtrength either of body or ſpirits which we may enjoy; but it enables us to exert all the ſtrength we poſſeſs, (which is often much more than we are apt to imagine) it is ſeated in the will, and never gives way in any inſtance.

Without this virtue, there can be no dependance on any other. Thoſe who have the beſt inclinations in the world, muſt find a time

time of difficulty,—a time when from the oppoſition they may meet with, or from their own weakneſs, the performance of their duty muſt require no ſmall degree of exertion; and if they have not fortitude to go on, in ſpite of all ſuch difficulties, their former good diſpoſitions and good actions will be of little uſe.

The practice of virtue is indeed often attended with applauſe ſufficient to animate vanity to aſſume the appearance of it; and even where it is pure and genuine, the eſteem and affection engaged by it, cannot but be highly pleaſing to all, and muſt afford ſome degree of aſſiſtance and ſupport. But there are many inſtances in which all theſe ſupports are entirely wanting; and true fortitude will enable us to act as we ought to do, without any ſuch aſſiſtance, and even when we are ſure that

that the conſequence of doing ſo will be directly contrary to all this.

It can bear not only the want of approbation, but the mortification of being ſlighted or blamed, and perſevere, whatever may be the conſequence in regard to this world; not from a contempt for the opinions of others, for it does not hinder ſuch humiliations from being felt, but it ſupports them with courage and reſolution, and will never endeavour to avoid them by the ſlighteſt deviation from the right path, or to return them by a diſplay of its ſuperiority, or by giving any degree of pain or humiliation to thoſe from whom they came. Far from being a ſtern or rugged quality, it is indiſpenſably neceſſary to ſupport that gentleneſs and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition, which form the charm of ſocial life, and which can never be long preſerved

ſerved by thoſe who have not fortitude to bear the vexations they muſt often meet with from the weakneſſes and inadvertencies, and even from the pride and ill-temper, of thoſe with whom they converſe; that *ſpirit*, (as it is commonly called) which immediately reſents every trifling injury, and endeavours to return it, is in fact a weakneſs,—a proof of not being able to bear them. True fortitude can conquer it; and without this, no apparent gentleneſs of character can ever be depended on, ſince it will only laſt till there is ſufficient provocation to get the better of it.

To the want of this kind of fortitude, much of the unhappineſs of ſociety is owing. A trifle gives offence, and is reſented; we cannot bear a little mortification, or humiliation; or, perhaps, we cannot bear to appear to want ſpirit to reſent ſuch things, and

do

do ourſelves juſtice. True fortitude can bear it all, whenever it is our duty to do ſo; and few conſider the importance of exerting it on ſuch occaſions.

It enables us to acknowledge our errors and our faults, inſtead of having recourſe to any artifice or miſrepreſentation to diſguiſe or juſtify what the heart in ſecret diſapproves, or muſt diſapprove, on a fair and impartial conſideration; to which, want of fortitude to bear the mortifying view of our own imperfections, is often one of the greateſt hindrances.

In great afflictions, fortitude is exerted not only in ſuppreſſing complaints and murmurs, but in rendering us ſuperior to them, by enabling us to take an enlarged view of things; to conſider the hand from which they come,

and

and the advantages which may be derived from them; and it inſpires not merely a tame ſubmiſſion, but an active reſolution, which in every trial exerts its utmoſt powers, and excites us to do the beſt we can, whatever that may be, and whatever ſtruggle ſuch exertion may coſt us.

In ſhort, it enables us to make the beſt of every thing, to purſue ſteadily and conſtantly the path of duty, unmoved by all the attacks of pleaſure or of pain, and unwearied by the moſt tedious and apparently unſucceſsful exertions.

In order to obtain this fortitude, we cannot but be ſenſible, that a ſtrength ſuperior to our own is neceſſary: the experience of every day muſt ſhew us our weakneſs, and the inſufficiency of thoſe ſupports which any thing in

in this world can afford us. But the Word of Eternal Truth has promiſed us a help which ſhall never fail thoſe who ſincerely ſeek for it: for this then we muſt apply by conſtant prayer, not only in general, but in every particular inſtance. But we muſt not ſuppoſe that this help can be obtained without exerting our own endeavours; we muſt do our beſt, that we may hope to be aſſiſted; and in ſo doing, we may ſecurely depend upon it, in every trial that can come upon us.

Too great a confidence in our own ſtrength is, indeed, directly contrary to true fortitude, and generally leads to a defeat; but we ſhould alſo be cautious that we do not run into another extreme, and give way to ſuch a degree of diffidence as may hinder us from exerting ourſelves, or give the name of diffidence to real indolence.

The

The conſciouſneſs of our own weakneſs ſhould, indeed, induce us to ſeek a more powerful aſſiſtance, but our endeavours are neceſſary in order to obtain it; and neither the preſumptuous, nor the indolent, have any right to hope for it.

Let us then exert ourſelves on every occaſion, and never give way in the ſmalleſt inſtance, if we mean to be ſteady in the greateſt. Let us endeavour to impreſs upon our minds the importance of the objects we have in view —the favour of GOD, and our own eternal happineſs; we ſhall then have a motive for action continually before us, ſufficient to ſupport us in the greateſt difficulties, to arm us againſt the ſevereſt ſhocks of affliction, and enable us to endure the longeſt courſe of ſufferings to which human life is liable.

Is it poſſible we ſhould ſink under the humiliation we may meet with from this world, while we may hope for the approbation of God himſelf? Can we not ſuffer a tranſitory affliction, with the proſpect of endleſs felicity before us?——It is for want of attending ſufficiently to theſe things, that preſent trials appear to us ſo inſupportable; and the only effectual preparation for theſe trials is, to arm ourſelves with comforts which they cannot take away, and motives for action which may be ſufficient to carry us through them with reſolution and vigour.

When we look into the Holy Scriptures, we find the Chriſtian life continually repreſented as a ſtate of warfare, in which we are called to contend with the temptations of this world, and with our own perverſe inclinations. We muſt deny ourſelves, and take up the

the croſs, if we would be the diſciples of Chriſt;—we muſt conquer, if we would obtain the crown;—we muſt lay aſide every weight, and run with patience the race that is ſet before us;—we muſt endure unto the end, if we hope to be ſaved.

Such is the account given us of the ſtate to which we are called, and ſuch a proſpect muſt ſtrongly impreſs upon our minds the neceſſity of arming ourſelves with true fortitude;—of being ſtedfaſt, immoveable, while we have the moſt powerful and comfortable motives to induce us to be ſo;—foraſmuch as we *know* that our "labour is not in vain in the Lord." We know that we ſhall conquer, if we faint not; that if we are faithful unto death, He will give us a crown of life—a happineſs beyond what the eye hath ſeen, or the ear heard, or the heart of man is able to conceive.

Such

Such a view of the Chriſtian ſtate muſt ſhew us, in a ſtrong light, the nature of that fortitude that is required, in order to enable us to perform our part in it. Human motives may inſpire occaſional exertions which excite admiration; but thoſe inſtances of fortitude which are moſt admired, are ſeldom, in reality, ſuch as are moſt difficult; and the true Chriſtian muſt be armed with a fortitude far ſuperior to that which is diſplayed on ſuch occaſions; a fortitude which requires no earthly ſupport; which aims at no preſent reward; which reſiſts pleaſure and pain, humiliation and wearineſs; which is the ſame at all times, and can always obtain the moſt difficult of all conqueſts—that which is gained over our own inclinations.

The perſon who ſacrifices pleaſure to ambition, convenience to avarice, or any preſent indulgence

indulgence to pride, or ſome other predominant paſſion, may appear to act with fortitude in many inſtances, when, in fact, his conduct is directly contrary to it; ſince he only gives way to a darling inclination, and purſues the means of gratifying it; and ſhould a trial come which required the ſacrifice of that inclination, his imaginary fortitude muſt fail.

But the fortitude of the true Chriſtian is prepared for every thing; like all his other virtues, it is not the occaſional exertion of a moment, but the conſtant diſpoſition of his mind. It is alſo, like all other virtues, never perfectly known, but by endeavouring to practiſe it. All are ſenſible that it is neceſſary in pain and afflictions; few conſider ſufficiently how often it is neceſſary even in the moſt ordinary occurrences—the moſt trifling converſations.

How often are the real ſentiments diſguiſed, the innocent injured, and falſe maxims ſuffered to gain ground, merely for want of reſolution to reſiſt the torrent, from a fear of being ſingular, or of loſing any ſhare in the good opinion of others by oppoſing their ſentiments! And thus the cauſe of truth and goodneſs is betrayed, and often ſuffers as much from timid friends, as from real enemies; for converſation will influence the character and conduct: by degrees the mind grows familiar with what once it diſapproved, and learns to believe what has been frequently repeated, and ſuffered to paſs unnoticed, till that delicacy, which was ſhocked at the leaſt appearance of any thing wrong, is inſenſibly worn away.

Wrong opinions miſlead the practice, and uncharitable ones corrupt the heart; but thoſe exertions which true fortitude inſpires, ſhould

at

at the ſame time be carefully diſtinguiſhed from that poſitiveneſs and love for contradiction which ſo often diſturb the peace and pleaſure of ſociety, and which (even when they happen to be exerted in a good cauſe) frequently do a real injury to what they mean to defend.

The perſon who feels pain in oppoſing the opinions and inclinations of others, and does it merely from a ſenſe of duty, will always endeavour to avoid giving pain by doing ſo; but a gentleneſs and timidity of diſpoſition, and an earneſt deſire to pleaſe, are qualities which may lead to exceſſes, as well as the contrary; and true fortitude requires the ſacrifice of our inclinations, whenever our duty makes it neceſſary.

But it is impoſſible to enumerate the various inſtances in which fortitude is neceſſary in the daily occurrences of life. A careful at-

tention to our own conduct, and a candid enquiry into the motives of it, will be the ſureſt means to point out to us wherein we are wanting, and to give us a juſt notion of that fortitude which is neceſſary to ſupport us on every different occaſion.

Let us then often examine our own hearts, and enquire, whether the fear of diſpleaſing others does not ſometimes induce us to diſguiſe our real ſentiments, and appear to approve what in our hearts we condemn?—Whether we are not ſometimes poſitive, becauſe we cannot bear to own ourſelves in the wrong; or complying, becauſe we dread being thought ſo?—Whether we do not ſometimes give a ſanction to uncertain ſuſpicions, or ill-natured ridicule, from a fear of being thought to poſſeſs leſs penetration than others, or from the apprehenſion of expoſing ourſelves

ſelves to the like, if we ſhould venture to oppoſe them?—In ſhort, whether we are never induced by fear, either to ſpeak, or to be ſilent, when our unprejudiced judgment would have led us to do otherwiſe? If ſo, we are, in that inſtance, wanting in true fortitude; nor is the want of it leſs evident in giving way to our own faults and weakneſſes, than to thoſe of others.

Can we ſubdue our pride, anger, fretfulneſs, &c.—all thoſe paſſions which are ſo often excited by trifles in common life, and which, on ſuch occaſions, are in general too eaſily ſuffered to take their courſe without reſiſtance? Do we not rather ſometimes give way to them, for want of reſolution to endeavour to ſuppreſs them; or from a fear of being deſpiſed for our inſenſibility, or our tameneſs, if we ſhould ſuffer any injury to paſs unno-

unnoticed? Can we bear the various kinds of mortifications we may meet with from others, without endeavouring to return them, and ſubmit even to unjuſt cenſure, when charity or any other duty requires our doing ſo? Can we ſacrifice our inclinations to thoſe of others, with cheerfulneſs and good-humour, without telling the world that we are doing ſo, and endeavouring to exalt ourſelves at the expence of thoſe we pretend to oblige, and to gain admiration to ſupport and reward us? Can we bear the follies and weakneſſes of thoſe with whom we converſe, and the many little circumſtances which often render ſociety tireſome to us, without giving pain by ſhewing that it is ſo? And do we endeavour, by every gentle and engaging method, not only to make others eaſy and happy, but to win them over to all that is amiable and good, and help them to amend thoſe imper-

fections

ſections which we cannot help obſerving, without expoſing them to the humiliation of knowing that we are ſenſible of them?—— The good that may be done in this way is ſeldom attended to as it deſerves; but ſuch endeavours require no ſmall degree of fortitude, ſince their ſucceſs muſt, in general, be attained by ſlow and almoſt imperceptible degrees, and often remains entirely unknown; and far from being attended with any admiration, they will, for the moſt part, paſs unnoticed,—perhaps often be totally miſinterpreted.

Theſe are but a few of the numberleſs occaſions in which true fortitude is neceſſary in common life. A little attention to the circumſtances which daily occur, will point out to us many more, on which it may be highly uſeful to enquire into the motives of our conduct; and ſuch enquiries will often ſhew, that a want of

fortitude

fortitude is in reality the ſource of many faults and imperfections, which are too generally overlooked, or aſcribed to ſome other cauſe.

How happy then is the ſituation of him who is armed with that true and conſtant fortitude, which reſts with full confidence on Almighty Power, and is ſupported by it in every trial;—who is thus prepared for all events, and able not only to *ſuffer*, but to *act* as he ought to do in every different ſituation;—who can bear with the ſame reſolution thoſe ſevere ſhocks which at once deſtroy his earthly happineſs, and thoſe little mortifications which continually allay it;—who never can be deterred from the path of duty, either by the allurements of pleaſure, the dread of ſufferings, or the wearineſs and diſguſt which attend on long-continued trials, and the diſcouragement of repeated diſappointments!

The

The nerves may tremble at the approach of pain,—the ſpirits may ſink beneath a load of grief,—but the reſolution remains unmoved; and pain or affliction, however ſtrongly felt, are boldly encountered, whenever they are inflicted by the diſpenſations of Providence, or when the conſideration of duty makes it neceſſary voluntarily to endure them.

This alone is true Chriſtian Fortitude;—a fortitude far ſuperior to that which in many ſtriking inſtances has engaged the admiration of mankind:—and this is neceſſary to all who wiſh to attain that perfection to which we are called.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.